San Francisco Planning Department

22 - 30 ALTA STREET

Draft Environmental Impact Report

97.433E

Draft EIR Publication Date: November 7, 1998
Draft EIR Public Hearing Date: December 10, 1998
Draft EIR Public Comment Period: November 7, 1998 to December 10, 1998

Written comments should be sent to:

The Environmental Review Officer
San Francisco Planning Department
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

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DATE: November 19, 1998

TO: Distribution List for the 22-30 Alta Street Project Draft EIR

FROM: Hillary E. Gitelman, Environmental Review Officer

SUBJECT: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the 22-30 Alta Street Project (Case No. 97.433E)

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Please be aware that the public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the 22-30 Alta Street Project began November 7, 1998 and will close December 10, 1998. A public hearing before the Planning Commission to accept comments on the Draft EIR will be held December 10, 1998.

In addition, the enclosed two pages (EIR Authors and Consultants; Organizations and Persons Consulted) are being provided and should be added to the copy of the Draft EIR you previously received in the mail. These pages will also be provided in the Final EIR Addendum.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

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DATE: November 7, 1998

TO: Distribution List for the 22-30 Alta Street Project Draft EIR

FROM: Hillary Gitelman, Environmental Review Officer

SUBJECT: Request for the Final Environmental Impact Report for the 22-30 Alta Street Project (Case No. 97.433E)

This is the Draft of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 22-30 Alta Street Project. A public hearing will be held on the adequacy and accuracy of this document. After the public hearing, our office will prepare and publish a document titled "Summary of Comments and Responses" which will contain a summary of all relevant comments on this Draft EIR and our responses to those comments; it may also specify changes to this Draft EIR. Public agencies and members of the public who testify at the hearing on the Draft EIR will automatically receive a copy of the Comments and Responses document, along with notice of the date reserved for certification; others may receive such copies and notice on request or by visiting our office. This Draft EIR together with the Summary of Comments and Responses document will be considered by the Planning Commission in an advertised public meeting and certified as a Final EIR if deemed adequate.

After certification, we will modify the Draft EIR as specified by the Comments and Responses document and print both documents in a single publication called the Final Environmental Impact Report. The Final EIR will add no new information to the combination of the two documents except to reproduce the certification resolution. It will simply provide the information in one rather than two documents. Therefore, if you receive a copy of the Comments and Responses document in addition to this copy of the Draft EIR, you will technically have a copy of the Final EIR.

We are aware that many people who receive the Draft EIR and Summary of Comments and Responses have no interest in receiving virtually the same information after the EIR has been certified. To avoid expending money and paper needlessly, we would like to send copies of the Final EIR to private individuals only if they request them. If you would like a copy of the Final EIR, therefore, please fill out and mail the postcard provided inside the back cover to the Major Environmental Analysis Office of the Planning Department within two weeks after certification of the EIR. Any private party not requesting a Final EIR by that time will not be mailed a copy.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

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San Francisco Planning Department

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CHAPTER I
SUMMARY

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (p. II-1)

The project site is 22-30 Alta Street in the Telegraph Hill neighborhood of San Francisco, on the north side of Alta Street, at the end of a dead-end street. Alta Street is between Union and Filbert and Montgomery and Sansome Streets. The project site is adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way, which includes the Grace Marchant Garden and Filbert Steps, and is located within the Telegraph Hill Historic District. The 7,500 (120' x 62.5') square-foot site consists of Lot 34A of Assessor's Block 106, and is currently vacant except for the remains of a previous apartment building foundation that was razed by the City in 1992.

The project would construct a six level, three-unit residential condominium structure. The building would include approximately 5,575 square feet (sq. ft.) of occupiable floor area, or about approximately 1,860 sq.ft. per unit. Parking and circulation space, including the lobby, would total about 2,240 sq. ft., for a total of about 7,815 sq. ft. The proposed building would cover about 36 percent of the lot.

The building height, measured according to the Planning Code, would be approximately 32 feet above street grade on Alta Street. At the rear, the maximum dimension along the north elevation would be approximately 73 feet, achieved in four separate wall planes, each set back from the one below. On the east elevation, the building would rise about 82 feet above the top of the steep slope. A parking garage would be located at street level (overall level four) with space for five automobiles. Entrance to the structure would be from Alta Street for pedestrians and vehicles. No demolition of existing structures would be involved. A rear exit would be located on the north side of the building. An existing low concrete wall that runs along the eastern edge of Alta Street, and that was extended in front of the entire length of the project site subsequent to the previous building located on the site being torn down, would be removed.

The Alta Street (south) elevation would include two stories of bay windows with horizontal banding above a solid garage door. The building design's Moderne references include curved terraces and building edges, cantilevered balconies, a cement plaster finish, horizontal window banding, and pipe terrace railings. Each of the six levels of the building would include a terrace of varying size.

Although the site is currently vacant, the Fred McNear Jr. Apartment Building was located there from 1935 to 1992.[1] This structure was a five-level, 3,250-occupied-square-foot, five-unit Moderne building (about 3,750 total sq. ft. including lobby and circulation space). The building was deemed unsafe for habitation and demolished by the City subsequent to storm-related damage to the foundation. The proposed project is intended to replace this destroyed building and takes cues from its Moderne architectural qualities.

The project site is within an RH-3 (Three-Family) District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District (40 foot maximum height limit, no bulk limit). The project would be a permitted use in the RH-3 district and would comply with Planning Code requirements concerning height, bulk, and use in the district in which it would be located. Project construction would take about 12 months, with occupancy planned for late 1999.

B. AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

This environmental impact report, for a proposed condominium project at 22-30 Alta Street, focuses on the issues of historic architectural resources and shadow as potential significant effects of the project, but also addresses land use, visual quality, geology, and biology as topics included for informational purposes. All other potential environmental effects were found to be at a less-than-significant level or to be mitigated to a level of less-than-significance with mitigation measures agreed to by the project sponsor. Please see the Initial Study, included in this document as Appendix A, for analysis of issues other than those addressed in this document.

The principal issues addressed in this environmental impact report are four-fold: the compatibility of the design (size, mass, and architectural style) of the proposed structure with the Telegraph Hill Historic District in which it would be located; the potential for impacts on the Grace Marchant Garden either by shadows cast by the proposed structure or during the course of the structure's construction; the potential blockage of views created by the location of the proposed structure; and the safety of building a structure of this size (or any structure at all) on a site that required the former apartment building located there to be razed by the City in 1992 and is considered by some to be geologically unsuitable for development. Nearby residents and others concerned with the historic and architectural/landscape resources of the neighborhood have expressed concern on a variety of specific components of the project that relate to one or more of these issues. According to the project sponsor, subsequent to review by the Architectural Review Committee of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB), the project's height, bulk, and square footage were all reduced in response to neighborhood concerns. On November 5, 1997, a public hearing before the Architectural Review Committee was held regarding the scaled down proposal by the project sponsor at which members of the public again expressed their concerns. The proposed project is the same project reviewed by the Architectural Review Committee at that hearing.

[1] Although not commonly known as or referred to by this name, for purposes of this document, the former building located at 22-30 Alta Street will be referred to as the McNear building. According to David Myrick, in his book entitled *San Francisco's Telegraph Hill*, the former building is officially named the Fred McNear Jr., Apartment Building.

C. MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES (p. III.B-1)

The project site is located in the Telegraph Hill Historic District, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1986 and which includes 80 structures and 15 undeveloped parcels. The unbuilt areas, including the cliff lots and particularly the Filbert Street right-of-way (which includes the Filbert Steps and Grace Marchant Garden) are visually and functionally integrated into the district's center as open space. Inextricably linked to the visual and recreational nature of the Steps is the Grace Marchant Garden (Garden), which itself is a unique and important component to the district. The Garden is located in the Filbert Street right-of-way, but extends into parcels that border on the street right-of-way, such as the project site. All or part of this local historic district may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources. The project is subject to the provisions of Appendix G to Article 10 of the Planning Code due to its location within the district.

The project's impact would not result in substantial modifications to the historic district as a whole, nor would it result in a compromise in the integrity or significance of any of the adjacent buildings that are identified as Contributory to the district. This conclusion is substantiated by three primary factors. First, the relative size of the proposed project represents a nominal change to the district's setting. Since the proposed project involves the construction of a single code-complying structure on a single piece of property within an historic district that includes eighty structures and covers many blocks, the resultant change is insufficiently large to compromise the significance of the district itself or to affect the significance of other surrounding properties in any meaningful way.

Second, as a replacement for a lost Contributory structure, the project would not irreparably or substantially alter the historic setting as a character-defining feature of the district or the nearby buildings. While the proposed building would provide parking, and would be taller, wider, and enclose more square footage than it predecessor, the degree of change would be insufficient to adversely affect any neighboring building's Contributory status. Third, as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness process, the proposed project is subject to review and approval by the Director of City Planning and/or the City Planning Commission acting with advice from LPAB. As such, the project would be closely evaluated for its compatibility with the guidelines set forth in Appendix G of Article 10 of the Planning Code.

VISUAL QUALITY (p. III.C-1)

The project would result in a visual change to the site and the Telegraph Hill neighborhood/historic district. The project would not be of a style similar to that of most of the buildings immediately surrounding the project site, although would share design characteristics with other Modern buildings in the neighborhood. Because the project would not visually alter the overall residential character of the existing neighborhood, be of such a scale as to stand out from locations other than those with direct views of the site, or introduce building materials or an architectural style that are foreign to the surrounding neighborhood, the project would not result in a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect.

There are three primary vantage points from which the site can be viewed: the intersection of Sansome and Filbert Streets, the Filbert Steps, and Alta Street east of Montgomery Street. From the most distant of the three views, approximately three-quarters of the building's overall mass would be visible. From this vantage point, the proposed structure would block views of the east elevation of 34 Alta Street, almost all of the north elevations of 34 and 40 Alta Street, the very top of a building across Alta Street from the site, and a patch of open sky. A viewer of the site from this perspective would see the proposed building relatively closer than the slightly more distant existing structures. When compared to pre-1992 conditions when the McNear building was located on the site, the project would result in only a minimal change.

From the middle range view, approximately half of the building's overall mass would be visible. From this vantage point, the proposed structure would block views of the vacant project site, the Alta Street retaining wall, the upper portions of buildings on the south side of Alta Street (17 and 19 Alta), and a patch of open sky. Views of the Grace Marchant Garden in the foreground would not be altered, although visitors to the Garden would have less open sky and more building mass in their viewshed when looking up towards the project site. The building would appear as an eastward extension of the existing building wall on the north side of Alta Street, although this would not substantially detract from the visual experience of the Garden. When compared to pre-1992 conditions when the McNear building was located on the site, the project would result in only a minimal change.

From the closest of the three views, approximately one third of the building's overall mass would be visible from this viewpoint. From this vantage point, the proposed structure would block views of the upper portion of the east elevation of 34 Alta Street, other buildings within the neighborhood in the distance, and a patch of open sky. From the viewpoint of looking eastward to the site from Alta Street, part of the view of the Bay, East Bay hills, Yerba Buena and Treasure Islands, and San Francisco piers would be obstructed. Compared to pre-1992 conditions when the McNear building was located on the site, the project would result in only a minimal change.

The changes to the site and surrounding areas as a result of the proposed project would be comparable to the results of the development on other sloping sites in San Francisco. Because view blockage would generally be limited to portions of adjacent and nearby building, the above changes would not be considered to substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas. The partial obstruction of views dominated by typical urbanized uses would not be considered substantial impairment of existing scenic views or vistas.

SHADOW (p. III.D-1)

The project site is among multi-story residential buildings on Alta and Montgomery Streets, which are two to four stories on their Alta Street frontages and up to six stories tall on their downslope facades. The project site is south of and adjacent to the Filbert Steps and the adjoining Grace Marchant Garden (Garden). Much of the Garden and the Filbert Steps, as well as much of the yards of the site and of the residences adjacent to the site and Garden, are currently in shadow all day from late November until late January and after mid-day from late January until early March and from early October until late November.

The difference in shadow effects caused by the project when compared to the vacant site in its current condition is that the project would add shadow to a portion of the Garden and adjoining areas for an interval of about two hours (10:00 a.m. to noon PST) from late January until early March and from early October until late November. When compared to conditions with the McNear building on the site, the project would result in 30 additional minutes (10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. PST) of shadow during the same two six-week periods.

The project would add no new shadow during the two months of the year when the Garden is currently in shade. Nor would the project add new shadow to the Garden during the interval from early March until early October, when the Garden is currently in full sun from morning until mid-afternoon. Accordingly, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on the biology of the Grace Marchant Garden.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMICITY (p. III.E-1)

A series of rockfalls have occurred in the vicinity of the project site since quarry operations ceased on Telegraph Hill in 1915. In 1992, following repaving by the City on Alta Street, a rockfall occurred on the slope at the foot of Alta Street dislodging and depositing talus on to the adjacent property to the east. The structure located at 22-30 Alta Street was demolished by the City as a result of the undermining of the building's foundation by this rockfall.

Considering past slope movements on the site, it can be assumed that future slope movement could take place in the more fractured, weathered shale rock overlying the sandstone, and rockfalls could continue occur on the steeper portions of the project site. Rockfalls from the project site are less likely to occur on the gradual northern slope and therefore are not likely to affect people or property in the vicinity of the Filbert Steps or Grace Marchant Garden. Compliance with the geotechnical recommendations and applicable Uniform Building Code (as modified for San Francisco) provisions would reduce the likelihood of future slope failure and rockfall hazards to a less-than-significant level.

Since the project site is located in proximity to known active faults in the San Francisco Bay Area, the proposed residential building would be subjected to seismically induced forces. Compliance with applicable current codes and recommendations of the project's geotechnical reports would reduce the impact of seismically induced structural damage to a less-than-significant level. Incorporation into the project of the slope treatments such would also reduce to a less-than-significant level the potential impact of seismically induced slope failure. Compliance with Title 24 standards and the San Francisco Building Code would reduce the impact of damage from unsecured objects in an earthquake to a less-than-significant level.

Preliminary recommended design of the building foundation involves the placement of approximately 32 interconnected straight-shaft reinforced 24-inch diameter concrete piers. A surface foundation, consisting of an interconnecting system of tie beam/shear walls, would connect to the piers. Possible hazards associated with such construction could include worker injury or death by falls, unstable or falling construction equipment, and ground vibration causing rock or debris to dislodge and roll down-

slope. Equipment and rocks falling from the project site during construction could result in damage to properties below or injury or death of people in the vicinity of the construction operations. Compliance with a strict health and safety plan, developed and implemented for this particular site would reduce the occurrence of construction-related accidents and therefore this impact would be less-than-significant.

BIOLOGY (p. III.F-1)

The Grace Marchant Garden is located adjacent to, and partially extending into, the project site. It includes maintained landscaping within the Filbert Street right-of-way as well as portions of adjoining private parcels. The project would have the potential to impact the Garden in three different ways.

First, construction of the proposed project would replace the old concrete foundations and extend onto a portion of the weedy, un-maintained area of the project site. The loss of this habitat, currently occupied by weeds and un-maintained ornamental vegetation, would represent a minor and less-than-significant loss of habitat. No special-status plant or animal species or their habitat would be adversely affected. Because the footprint of the proposed building contains no large or scenic trees, no such resources would be affected.

Second, during construction, some additional surface disturbance would occur beyond the building footprint, resulting in additional loss of vegetation. Depending on the extent of surface disturbance beyond the building footprint, construction could result in the direct loss of a portion of landscaped vegetation that is part of the Garden. In addition, there could be some adverse impacts from debris sliding or rolling downslope into the Garden. This impact would be adverse because of its effect on the Garden, however, because it would not substantially impact rare and endangered species or habitats, and would not require removal of substantial numbers of large or scenic trees, it would be considered less than significant.

Third, the impact of the increased shading to the Garden would be to favor a palette of slightly more shade-tolerant species, especially in the area nearest the proposed building. Most of the planted species currently in the Garden are already somewhat tolerant of shade, since the exposure and existing buildings already cast shade into the Gardens. In addition, the plantings put in place prior to 1992 were established when the shade regime included the former building, which cast about three-fourths as much shade as the proposed structure. Therefore, most of the plantings currently in the Garden, especially the older ones, are expected to continue to thrive.

Some species, such as roses, benefit from direct sun for a portion of the day during the growing season. Since the portion of the Garden with rose plantings (primarily in the northern portion of the project property and the adjacent area of the Filbert Street right-of-way) would receive less direct sun as a result of the project, there would likely be detectable adverse effects on these plantings. However, most of the plantings in the intensively gardened portion of the Garden are expected to continue to grow and flower, as they did when the previous building was in place and light conditions were similar to those projected with the new building in place. The intensively gardened portion of the Garden would continue to provide

suitable habitat for a greater variety of open shade-loving plants than would the less intensively-gardened portion.

D. MITIGATION MEASURES (p. IV-1)

MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

As described in the attached Initial Study (Appendix A), the proposed project has the potential to temporarily affect local air quality as a result of construction activities. As a result, the project sponsor has agreed to implement the following mitigation measure:

- The project sponsor would require the contractor(s) to sprinkle exterior demolition sites with water during demolition, excavation and construction activity; sprinkle unpaved exterior construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other material; cover trucks hauling debris, soil, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during demolition and construction at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor would require that the contractor(s) obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

E. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT (p. VI-1)

ALTERNATIVE A: NO PROJECT

This alternative would entail no change to the site, which would remain in its existing vacant condition. If the No Project Alternative were implemented, no impacts of the project would occur.

ALTERNATIVE B: REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVE

This alternative would involve the construction of a new structure on the site that would generally be a replica of the Fred McNear Jr. Apartment Building that occupied the site from 1935 to 1992, except that this alternative, like the project, would include three residential units, rather than five units as existed in the prior building. Construction of this replacement structure would not create any new shadow effects or impacts to the Telegraph Hill Historic District when compared to the site's pre-1992 conditions. Construction of a structure under this alternative's conditions would create new shadow impacts on surrounding properties and the Grace Marchant Garden when compared to existing conditions. Under this alternative, geological impacts on the project site would similar to those identified for the proposed project. Although there are no potentially significant impacts associated with the proposed project, this alternative would be considered the environmentally superior alternative because it would not introduce any new shadow impacts to the site, surrounding neighborhood, or Telegraph Hill Historic District when compared to the Fred McNear, Jr. Apartment Building that occupied the site from 1935 to 1992.

CHAPTER II
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. SITE LOCATION AND PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The project site is 22-30 Alta Street in the Telegraph Hill neighborhood of San Francisco, on the north side of Alta Street, at the end of a dead-end street. Alta Street is between Union and Filbert and Montgomery and Sansome Streets (see Figure 1). The project site is adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way, which includes the Grace Marchant Garden and Filbert Steps, and is located within the Telegraph Hill Historic District. The 7,500 (120' x 62.5') square-foot site consists of Lot 34A of Assessor's Block 106, and is currently vacant except for the remains of a previous apartment building foundation that was razed by the City in 1992. The rectangular site slopes very steeply down the face of Telegraph Hill to the north and east, dropping more than 60 feet vertically over its 120-foot horizontal length.

The project would construct a six level, three-unit residential condominium structure. The building would include approximately 5,575 square feet (sq. ft.) of occupiable floor area, or about approximately 1,860 sq.ft. per unit. Parking and circulation space, including the lobby, would total about 2,240 sq. ft., for a total of about 7,815 sq. ft. Each unit would be on two levels and would have a distinct floor plan from the other units. Each unit would have two bedrooms and two would have two bathrooms, while one would have three bathrooms.

The proposed building would cover about 36 percent of the lot.[1] The building would be setback from 17 to 22 feet from the east lot line (location of the stairwell) and more than 51 feet from the rear (north) property line. There would be no setbacks from the front (south) or west lot lines.

The building height, measured according to the Planning Code[2], would be approximately 32 feet above street grade on Alta Street. At the rear, the maximum dimension along the north elevation (from grade to roof) would be approximately 73 feet, achieved in four separate wall planes, each set back from the one below. On the east elevation, the building would rise about 82 feet above the top of the steep slope. A parking garage would be located at street level (overall level four) with space for five automobiles. Entrance to the structure would be from Alta Street for pedestrians and vehicles. No demolition of

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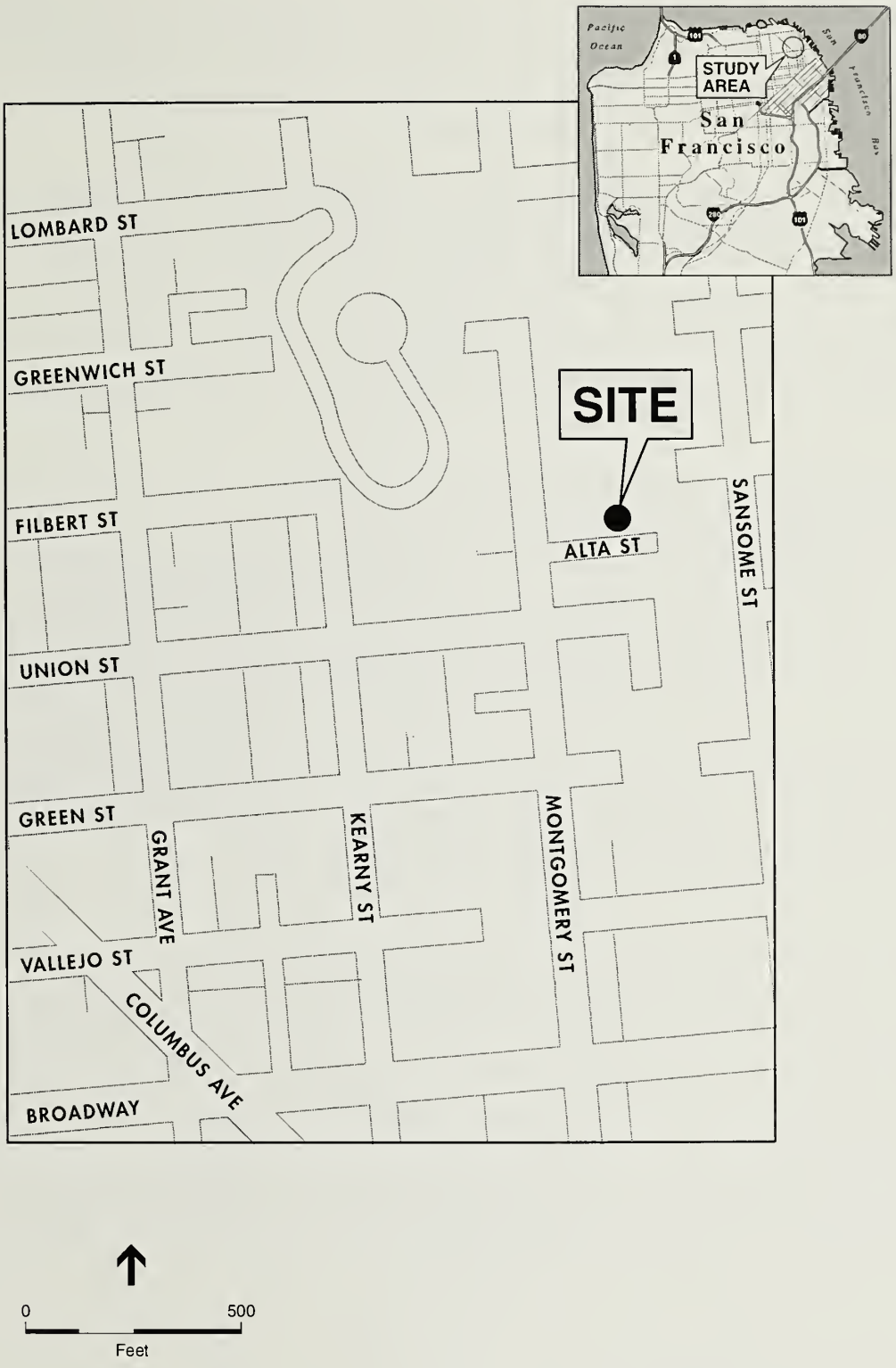
[1] Because of the site's steepness, particularly its eastern edge, it is likely that portions of the site are not suitable for development.

[2] For structures on downward sloping lots, the height of a building for Planning Code purposes is measured from the midpoint of the curb in front of the building for the first 100 feet of lot depth (Section 102.12B).



SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 1
Site Location Map

existing structures would be involved. A rear emergency exit would be located on the north side of the building (see Figure 2). An existing low concrete wall that runs along the eastern edge of Alta Street, and that was extended in front of the entire length of the project site subsequent to the previous building located on the site being torn down, would be removed.

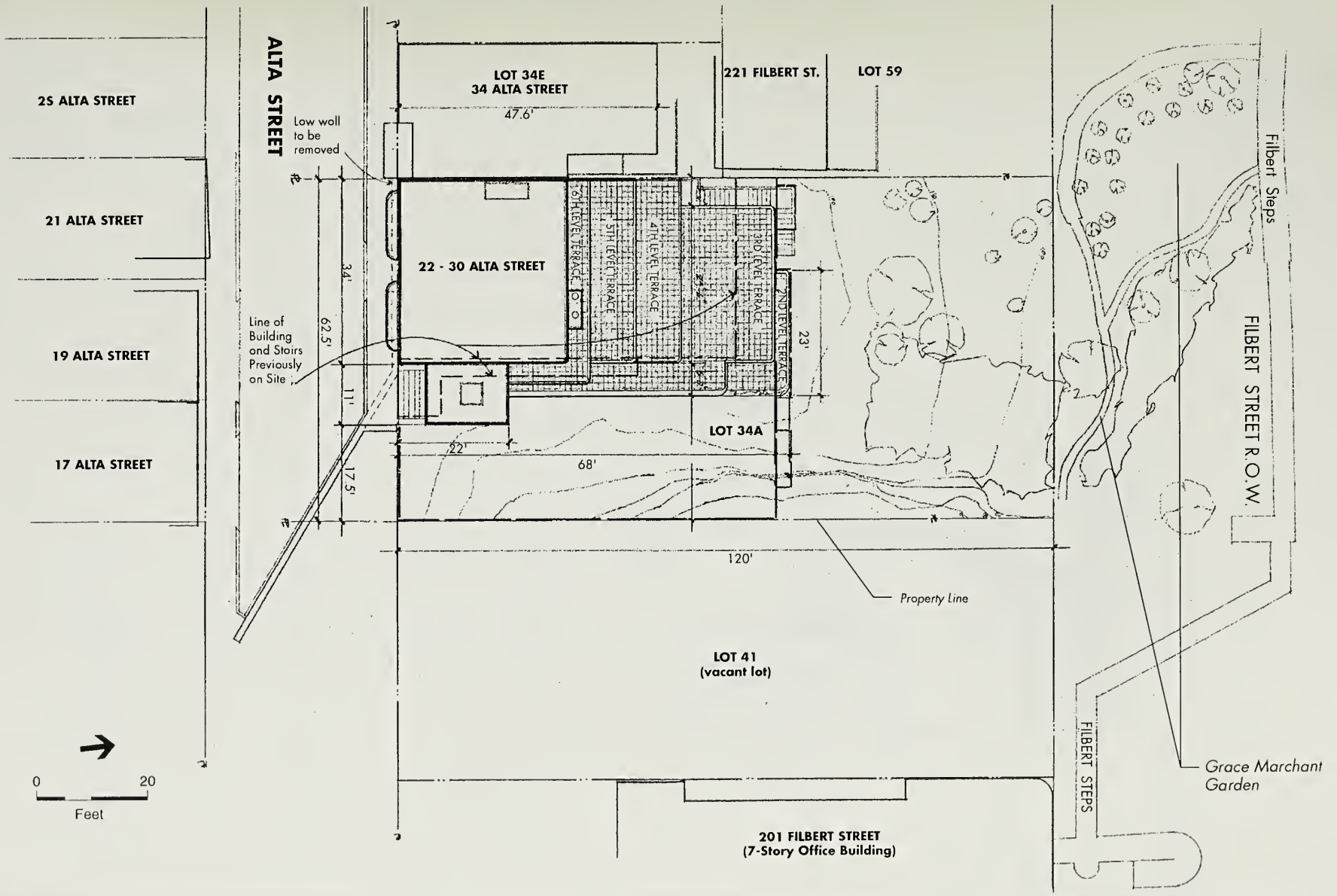
The Alta Street (south) elevation would include two stories of bay windows with horizontal banding above a solid garage door (see Figure 3). An entrance along the eastern side of the south elevation would include metalwork and etched glass above the doorway and a skylight over the entrance lobby. The exterior would have a cement plaster finish. A building logo and the street name and address would be displayed on a cantilevered extension of the second-story facade that would serve to shelter the entry. The building design's Moderne references include curved terraces and building edges, cantilevered balconies, a cement plaster finish, horizontal window banding, and pipe terrace railings.

The western elevation of the building would primarily be adjacent to the existing apartment building at 34 Alta Street, however a portion of the proposed structure would extend beyond 34 Alta Street downslope to the north (see Figure 4). Each of the six levels of the building would include a terrace of varying size, that would wrap along the rear (north) and east-facing elevations of the building (see Figure 5). The southern portion of the east elevation would include an enclosed stairwell with three small rectangular windows at levels 3-5 and four rectangular glass block windows at levels 3-6 (see Figure 6).

Although the site is currently vacant, the Fred McNear, Jr. Apartment Building was located there from 1935 to 1992.[3] This structure was a five-level, 3,250-occupied-square-foot, five-unit Moderne building (about 3,750 total sq. ft. including lobby and circulation space). It rose one and one-half levels above Alta Street and extended three and one-half levels below Alta Street at the rear, or five stories in all, compared to six stories currently proposed. The McNear building had no on-site parking.

In 1992, while roadwork was being performed on Alta Street by the City that included removing the street's top concrete layer, two weeks of unexpected heavy rain fell on the City during what had been a drought year. The McNear building had been built with a shallow footing on the loose rock of the site and the rainfall led to the building's foundation being undermined. The concrete was subsequently replaced on the street, but the McNear building was ultimately deemed unsafe for habitation and demolished by the City. Subsequently, the City undertook major stabilization measures, including but not limited to: substantial scaling of loose rock, a pier-supported wall at the end of Alta Street, installation of rockbolting, and rockfall netting. The proposed project is intended to replace this destroyed building and takes cues from its Moderne architectural qualities.

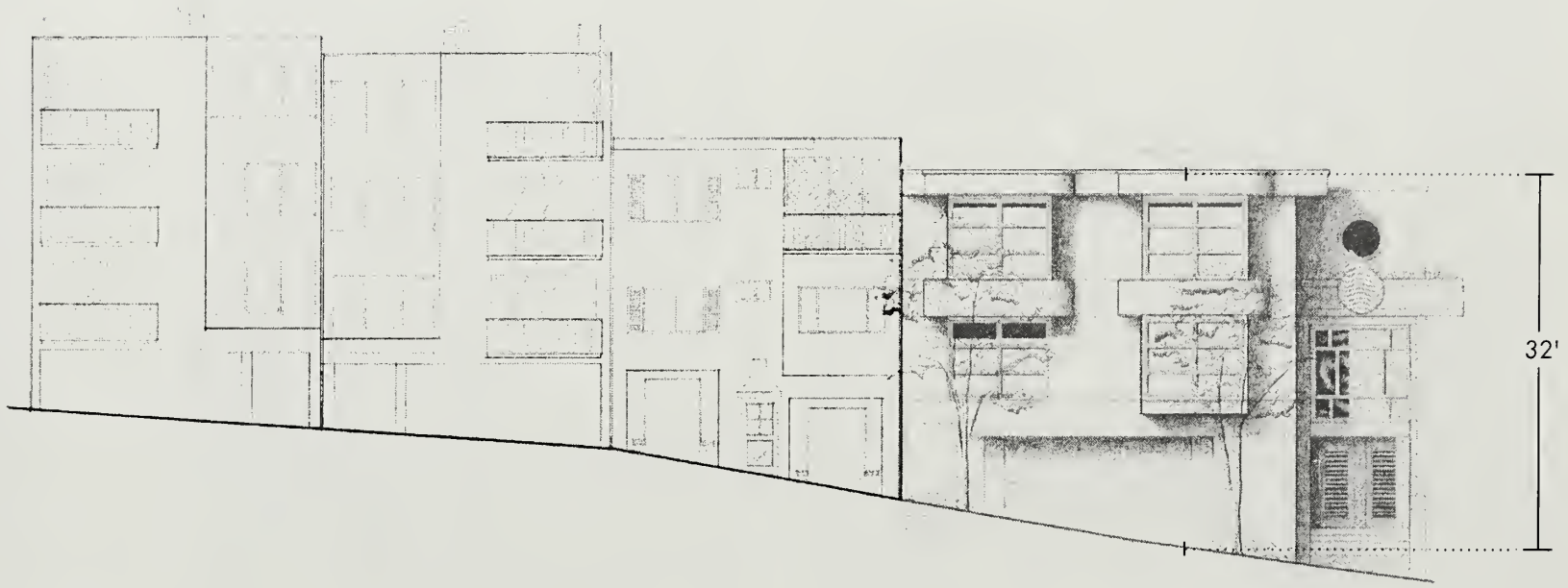
[3] Although not commonly known as or referred to by this name, for purposes of this document, the former building located at 22-30 Alta Street will be referred to as the McNear building. According to David Myrick, in his book entitled *San Francisco's Telegraph Hill*, the former building is officially named the Fred McNear Jr., Apartment Building.



SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

22–30 Alta Street ■

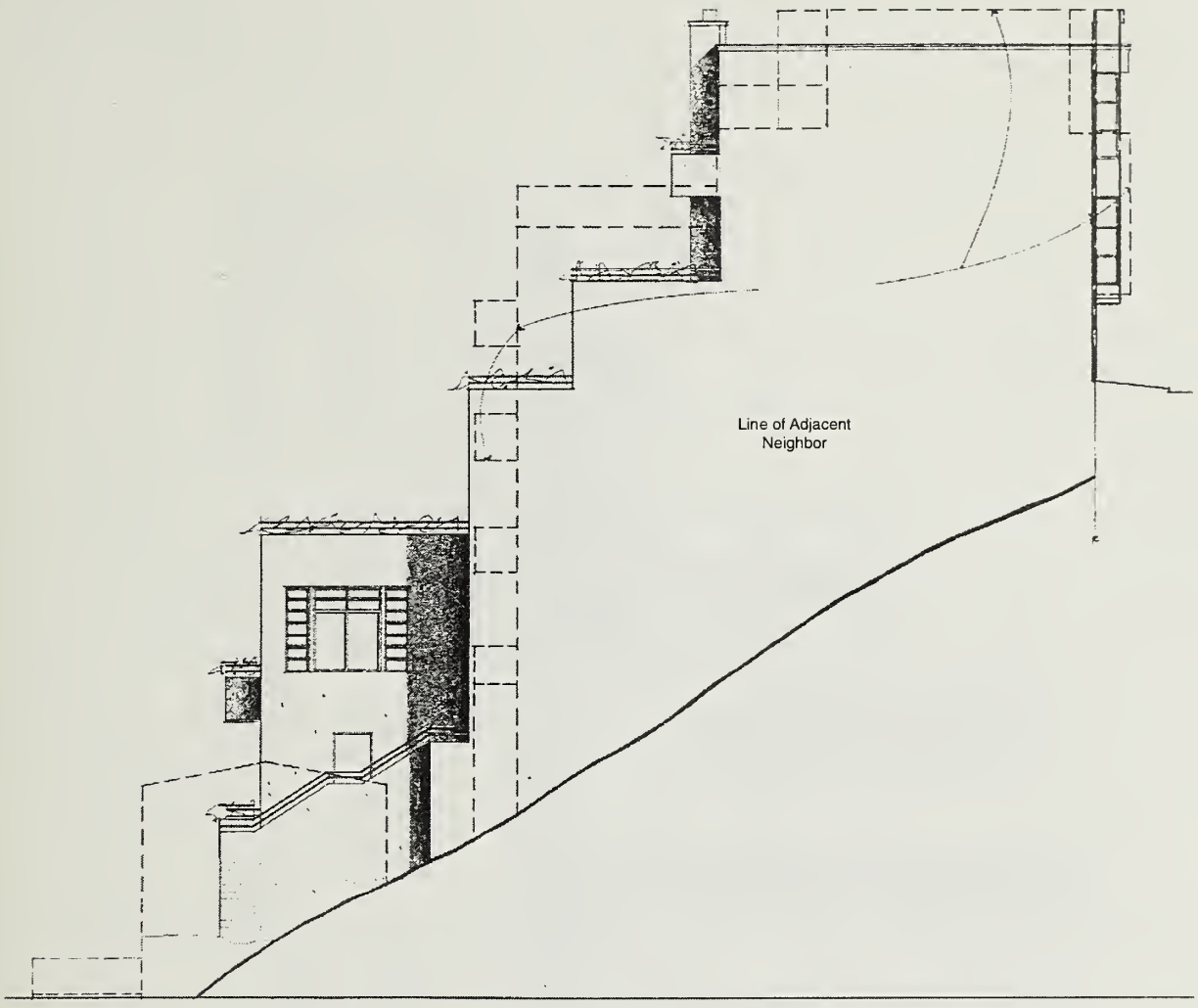
Figure 2
Site/Roof Plan



SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 3
South Elevation

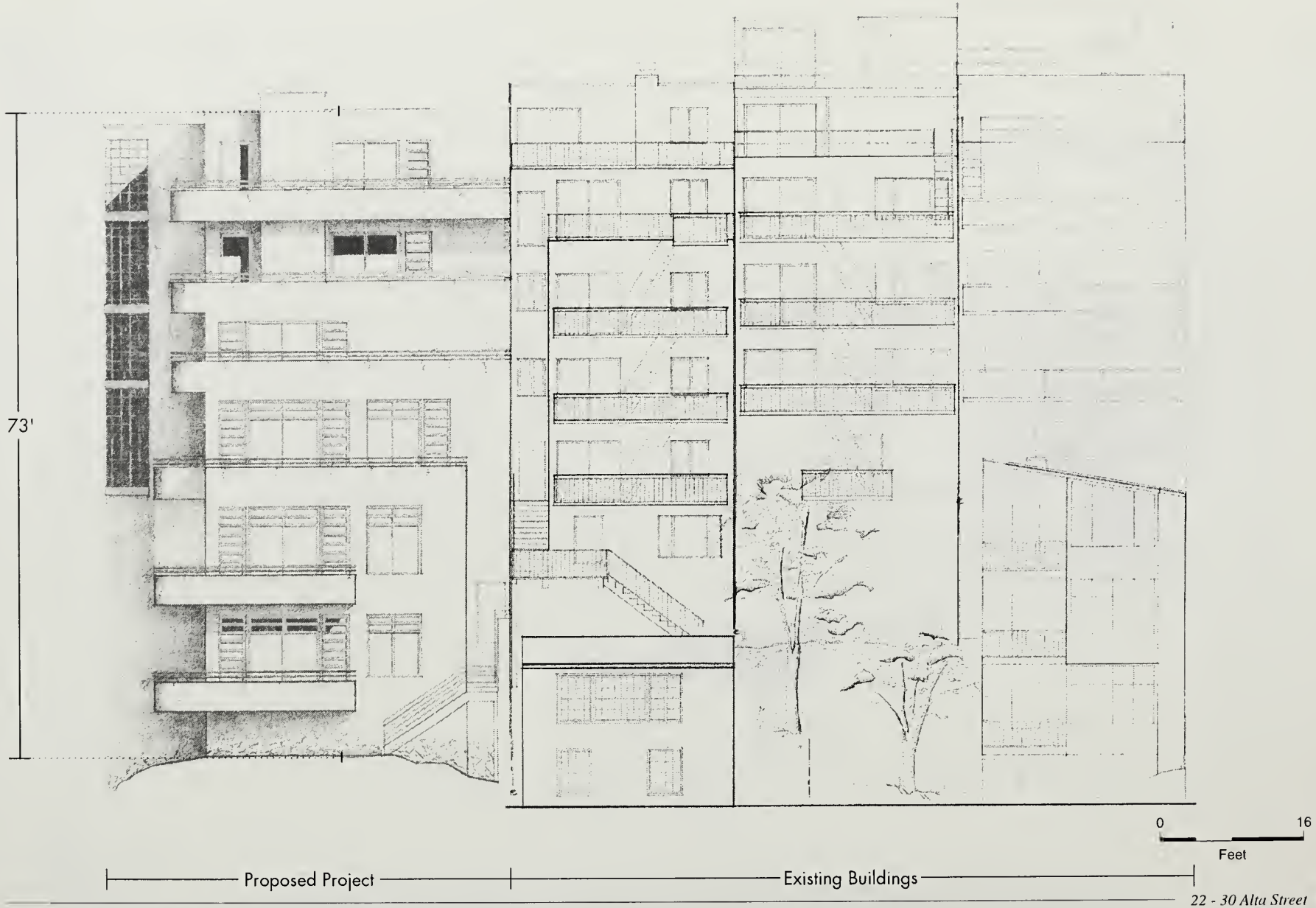


0 16
Feet

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

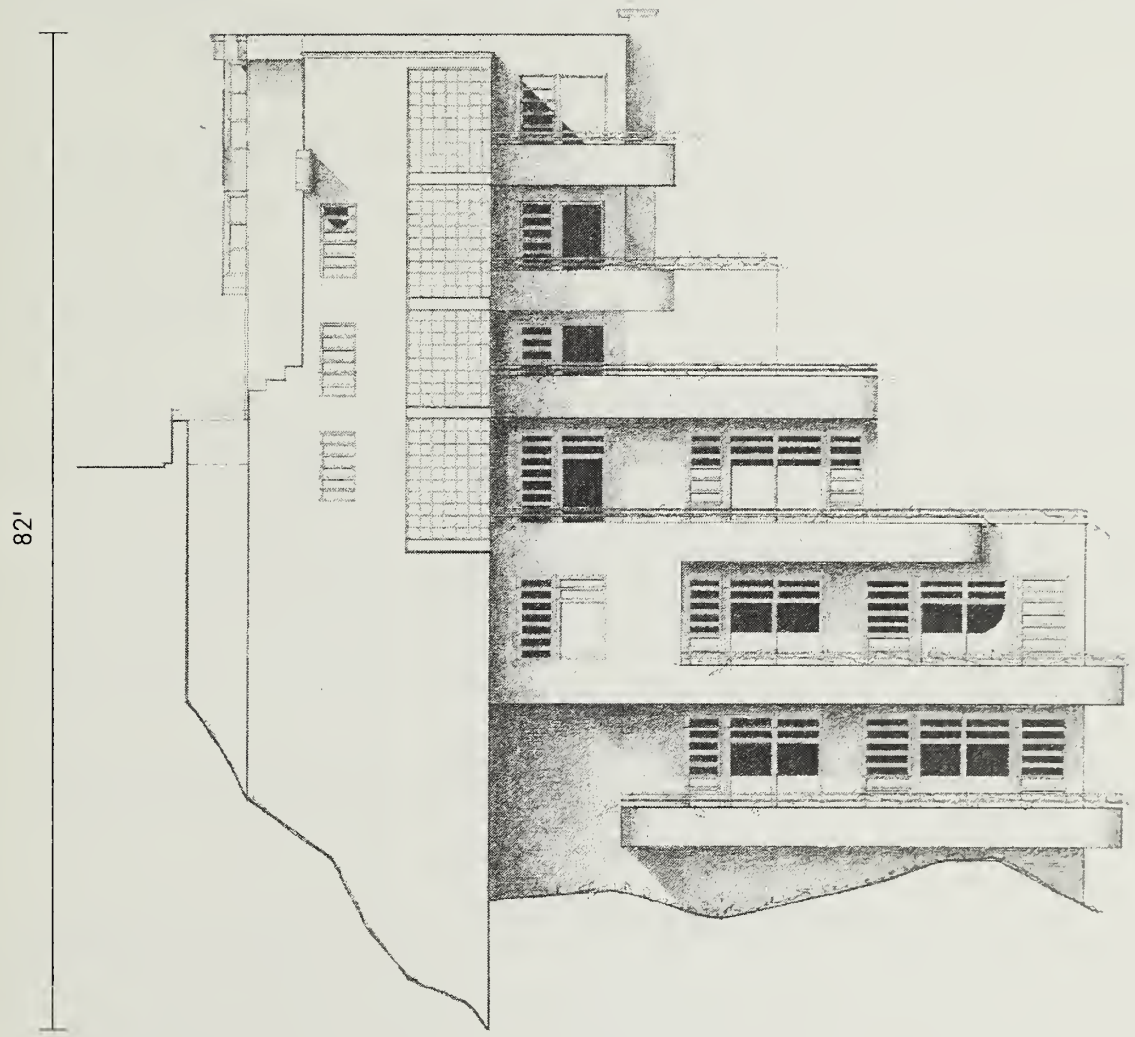
SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

Figure 4
West Elevation



SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

Figure 5
North Elevation



22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

Figure 6
East Elevation

The project site is within an RH-3 (Three-Family) District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District (40-foot maximum height limit, no bulk limit). This district allows three units per lot and one unit per 1,000 sq.ft. of lot area as a conditional use (a maximum of seven units would be permitted on the subject site). The project would be a permitted use in the RH-3 district and would comply with Planning Code requirements concerning height, bulk, and use in the district in which it would be located. Project construction would take about 12 months, with occupancy planned for late 1999. The project architects are McEachron Architects and Pfau Architecture. The project's principal characteristics are summarized in Table 1.

In addition, a number of slope stabilization measures are proposed as part of the project, including:

- installation of a system of vertical piers, some as deep as 40 feet, into the slope and restrained from later movement by a system of beams and walls;
- installation of a drainage system that would include horizontal drains of more 30 feet in length to ensure proper runoff;
- installation of additional prestressed rockbolts in the various locations on the bedrock slope to supplement those installed in 1993;
- installation of gabion wire netting across the upper portions of the slope face;
- shotcrete covering or structural wire mesh could be used to reduce bedrock raveling thus reducing maintenance of the upper slope (gunite would also reduce surface water infiltration);
- removal of loose or overhanging rocks and installation of rock netting to reduce future rockfalls and contain talus; and
- direction of surface drainage away from the foundation of the proposed structure (via a connection to the existing city storm drainage system) to avoid water flowing or ponding adjacent to the foundation.

The property owner has recorded a Notice of Permissive Use acknowledging that the public has the permission of the owner to make use of a portion of the property subject to control by the owner, allowing gardening on the unbuilt portion of the project site, to the rear (north) of the building site, where the site lot adjoins the Filbert Steps. The project sponsor has indicated that it will offer to dedicate this portion of the site for public gardening activities on a permanent basis if the project is approved as proposed.

B. PROJECT SPONSOR'S OBJECTIVES

The project sponsor has identified the following objectives for the project:

- to provide replacement housing with a comparable number of bedrooms to those included in the prior building that was demolished;
- to provide on-site parking, in contrast to the prior building that included no parking;

TABLE 1
PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Site zoning	RH-3, House-Three-Family
Height limit / Bulk limit	40 feet / none
Proposed / Previous use	Residential Units
Proposed height (each elevation)	32 feet (south),[a] 73 feet (north), and 82 feet (east)
Levels	Six
Setbacks	East = 17-22 feet, north = 51 feet, west and south = 0.
Parking spaces	Five
Site area	7,500 square feet
Floor area [b]	5,575 occupiable square feet
Number of units	Three
Average unit size	1,860 square feet
Total building area [c]	7,815 total square feet
Lot coverage	36 percent

[a] As measured according to the Planning Code.
[b] Floor Area, in gross square feet (excludes parking).
[c] Including approximately 2,240 square feet of parking.

- to construct a building comparable in height, mass, and exterior treatment to existing nearby structures and to the Telegraph Hill Historic District, and a building that reflects the design characteristics of existing structures and the District;
- to ensure seismic and geologic safety in design and construction; and
- to provide economically viable home-ownership opportunities.

C. PROJECT APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

This EIR will undergo a public comment period as noted on the cover, including a public hearing before the City Planning Commission on the Draft EIR. Following the public comment period, responses to written and oral comments will be prepared and published in a Draft Summary of Comments and Responses document. The EIR will be revised as appropriate and presented to the City Planning Commission for certification as to accuracy, objectivity, and completeness. No approvals or permits may be issued before the Final EIR is certified. The Department of Building Inspection would require a building permit for the construction of a new building. The Department of Public Works would require a minor street encroachment permit to rebuild the curb for access to the proposed parking garage.

A Certificate of Appropriateness would be required as set forth in Appendix G to Article 10 of the Planning Code for new construction within the Telegraph Hill Historic District. The Certificate of Appropriateness would be considered by the City Planning Commission upon the advice of the

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. Review for this approval would include an assessment of the proposed project's compatibility with the character of the historic district, compatibility with prevailing heights (both topographic and built), and appropriateness of design.

On November 4, 1986, the voters of San Francisco passed Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative, which established eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA), or adopting any zoning ordinance or development agreement, the City is required to find that the proposed project or legislation is consistent with the Priority Policies.

The City and County of San Francisco *General Plan* provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions. In general, potential conflicts with the *General Plan* are considered by the decisions-makers (normally the Planning Commission) independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision to approve, modify or disapprove a proposed project. Any potential conflict not identified here could be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project. Some of the key objectives and policies are noted below.

COMMUNITY SAFETY ELEMENT

Policy 2.1: Assure that new construction meets current structural and life safety standards.

Policy 2.3: Consider site soils conditions when reviewing projects in areas subject to liquefaction or slope instability.

Policy 2.5: Assess the risks presented by other types of potentially hazardous structures and reduce the risks to the extent possible.

Policy 2.9: Consider information about geologic hazards whenever City decisions that will influence land use, building density, building configurations or infrastructure are made.

RESIDENCE ELEMENT

Objective 1, Policy 4: Locate infill housing on appropriate sites in established neighborhoods.

Objective 2, Policy 1: Set allowable densities in established residential areas at levels which will promote compatibility with prevailing neighborhood scale and character.

Objective 12, Policy 4: Promote construction of well designed housing that conserves existing neighborhood character.

Objective 12, Policy 6: Modify proposed developments which have substantial adverse environmental impacts or otherwise conflict with the General (Master) Plan.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Objective 2, Policy 3: Preserve sunlight in public open spaces.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ELEMENT

Objective 7, Policy 2: Protect land from changes that would make it unsafe or unsightly.

Objective 7, Policy 4: Assure correction of landslide and shore erosion conditions where it is in the public interest to do so.

Objective 7, Policy 5: Prohibit construction, as a general rule, on land subject to slide or erosion.

Objective 8, Policy 2: Protect the habitats of known plant and animal species and require a relatively natural environment.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

Objective 1, Policy 1: Recognize and protect major views in the city, with particular attention to those of open space and water.

Objective 1, Policy 3: Recognize that buildings, when seen together, produce a total effect that characterizes the city and its districts.

Objective 2, Policy 4: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past developments.

Objective 2, Policy 6: Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.

Objective 2, Policy 7: Recognize and protect outstanding and unique areas that contribute in an extraordinary degree to San Francisco's visual form and character.

Objective 3, Policy 1: Promote harmony in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings.

Objective 3, Policy 2: Avoid extreme contrasts in color, shape and other characteristics which will cause new buildings to stand out in excess of their public importance.

Objective 3, Policy 3: Promote efforts to achieve high quality of design for buildings to be constructed at prominent locations.

Objective 3, Policy 4: Promote building forms that will respect and improve the integrity of open spaces and other public areas.

Objective 3, Policy 5: Relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development.

Objective 3, Policy 6: Relate to the bulk of buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.

Objective 4, Policy 15: Protect the livability and character of residential properties from the intrusion of incompatible new buildings.

CHAPTER III
ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACTS

This EIR examines effects of the proposed construction of a three-unit building on Alta Street east of Montgomery Street, on the east slope of Telegraph Hill. The prior building on the site was demolished, by the City of San Francisco following storm-caused damage to the building's foundation. This analysis compares the proposed project both to the existing condition (1998), as well as to the condition in which the prior building was extant.

A. LAND USE

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

The Initial Study concluded that the project would not have adverse land use impacts. Land use information is included in the EIR for informational purposes, to orient the reader.

Situated in the Telegraph Hill Historic District, land uses adjacent to and near the project site are almost entirely residential. Immediately to the rear (north) of the site is the Filbert Street right-of-way, which includes the renowned Grace Marchant Garden (Garden) and the Filbert Steps (Steps) that transverse Telegraph Hill. Front and rear yards of some of the properties adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way (including the project site's) function as part of the Garden. The owner of the subject site has recorded a Notice of Permissive Use acknowledging that the public has the permission of the owner to make use of a portion of the property, subject to control by the owner, allowing gardening activities and maintenance of the Garden to the rear of the property. The project sponsor has indicated it will offer to dedicate this portion of the site for public gardening activities on a permanent basis if the project is approved as proposed. The project site is located on a dead-end street on which all of the buildings are residential. Adjacent to the west of the site is an existing multi-unit residential building. Across Alta Street to the south is a mix of residential buildings of varying size and age. To the east is a vacant lot that has similar dimensions to the project site and is exceptionally steep, dropping more than 80 feet vertically over 60 horizontal feet. At the base of this adjacent lot, along Sansome Street, is an office district composed mostly of mid-rise individual structures and the Levi's Plaza campus of buildings.

The project, construction of a new three-unit residential structure, would be compatible with existing nearby uses. The project site is within an area identified in both the General Plan and the Planning Code as acceptable for residential use.

With the proposed project, there would be no change in land use compared to the prior building on the site, nor would there be any land use incompatibility with other nearby residential buildings. Therefore, the project would not contribute to any cumulative changes in land use.

RECREATIONAL USE

The proposed project site is located adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way within which are located the Garden and Steps, both public recreational resources used by local residents and visitors to the neighborhood. Further, the City maintains a conservation easement over portions of the Garden, ensuring its maintenance as a public resource.

Although the project would have the potential for adverse effects to the Garden due to shadowing (as addressed in sections III.D, Shadow and III.F, Biology), there would not be the potential for the project to substantially diminish or conflict with the established recreational uses of the Garden and Steps. The Garden and Steps were used as recreational resources in a manner similar to how they are currently used during the period in which the McNear building occupied the project site. Subsequent to construction of the proposed project, residents and visitors would likely continue to use these resources as public open space. Further, construction activity for the proposed project would be temporary and would likely not result in direct impacts on recreational uses of the Garden or Steps. Therefore, the proposed project is not expected to conflict with the established recreational use of the project vicinity.

B. HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

SETTING

TELEGRAPH HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Overview

An historic district may be defined as an area possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings and structures that are united by past events, or aesthetically by plan or physical development. Historic districts are defined by their "period of significance" which is the length of time when a district attained the characteristics that give it significance. Building alterations and new construction within an historic district are usually controlled by the application of design guidelines that will help maintain a district's architectural, historical and contextual continuity.

Background

Most of San Francisco's Colonial buildings from the Spanish and Mexican periods were destroyed in the "great fire" in 1850. With the notable exceptions of Mission Dolores and a cluster of buildings in the Presidio, San Francisco's oldest surviving buildings date from the American settlement of the area and are found within the boundaries of the 1906 fire zone. Three concentrations of such buildings survived that conflagration; they are clustered in Jackson Square, along the Vallejo Street crest of Russian Hill, and along the eastern slope of Telegraph Hill. Both Jackson Square and parts of Telegraph Hill have been designated as local historic districts by action of the Board of Supervisors, upon recommendation of the Planning Commission and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB).[1] The Telegraph Hill Historic District became the sixth district to receive local historic district protection when it was adopted in August 1985.

Boundaries and Components

The Telegraph Hill Historic District is defined by a boundary located within the 1906 fire zone and covers only a small portion of the area known as Telegraph Hill. The district is centered on a concentration of surviving pre-1870s structures located on the north side of Filbert Street between Montgomery and Sansome Streets, including two small pedestrian streets, Napier Lane and Darrell Place, and related open spaces (see Figure 7). As adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1986, the district contains 80 structures on 88 parcels, including: 44 contributing structures; 10 altered/contributing structures built during the district's period of significance but lacking in integrity; 26 non-contributors that were built after 1941 that presumably lack architectural and/or historic significance; and 15 undeveloped parcels that are neither contributing or non-contributing because they are street rights-of-way or vacant lots. The non-contributing structures within the district are those built after the district's period of significance that represent a change

[1] Russian Hill remains unprotected as a local historic district, although the most historic parts of the Hill are listed as a National Register Historic District.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 7
Telegraph Hill Historic District

in the scale and pattern of development and create physical barriers in the area that interrupt the visual and historic continuity of the district. All or part of this local historic district may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources.

The district includes steep street rights-of-way that are impassable except on foot, five vacant but buildable lots, and several other vacant but presumably unbuildable cliff lots. The unbuilt areas, including the cliff lots and particularly the Filbert Street right-of-way (which includes the Filbert Steps and Grace Marchant Garden) are visually and functionally integrated into the district's center as open space. The Filbert Steps (Steps) serve as a means for pedestrians to transverse Telegraph Hill and gain access to Coit Tower, and as such, attract numerous visitors for those purposes. Inextricably linked to the visual and recreational nature of the Steps is the Grace Marchant Garden (Garden), which itself is a unique and important component to the district as noted in the LPAB case report (See Appendix B). The Garden is located in the Filbert Street right-of-way, but because of an absence of property line fencing, visually extends into parcels that border on the street right-of-way. The project site is one such parcel. For a more detailed description of the Garden, see section III.F, Biology, below.

The Planning Code (Article 10, Appendix G, Section 6) explicitly states that "architectural features of the said Historic District that should be preserved are described and depicted in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board's case report with appendix"(see Appendix C). The case report recognizes the historic architectural merit of the district's buildings, states that the cliffs "are a highly significant and aesthetically important component defining the setting of the district," and notes that "unimproved street rights-of-way are valuable open space." The appendix to the case report notes, "the setting of walkways, gardens and cliffsides [as] an integral part of the district."

Period of Significance

The district's period of significance is from 1852-1941. The LPAB case report for the district found architectural, historical and contextual significance as expressed in the architecture, history, and development pattern that began with the concentration of pre-1870s cottages and ended with a group of pre-WWII buildings in the Moderne and International Styles built through 1941 (see Figure 8). The Telegraph Hill Historic District's Contributory[2] buildings represent at least nine successive or overlapping architectural styles. This is the largest collection of architectural styles found in any local historic district in San Francisco, and as such, the later buildings and styles share few characteristics with the earlier ones. Spanning nearly 90 years, the district's period of significance is composed of three relatively distinct local historical periods: the Settlement Period (1852-1869), the Middle Period (1870-1934), and the Modern Period (1935-1941). The district includes 22 buildings from the Settlement Period, 23 from the Middle Period, and 13 from the Modern Period.[3]

[2] These structures are of the highest importance in maintaining the character of the Historic District.
[3] Corrected to reflect buildings altered beyond recognition.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Don Maskell

Figure 8
Telegraph Hill Historic District, 1970

The Telegraph Hill Historic District is one of only five areas in the City to contain examples of the Settlement Period or earlier architecture and development patterns. With few surviving structures from this period, the oldest being the Johnson Grocery Store at 1301 Montgomery (built in 1852), these structures are greatly valued and among the rarest in the City. Beginning in the late 1850s, vernacular cottages, some with minimal Greek Revival detailing, were built. This style is rare in California and was soon supplanted by the Carpenter Gothic, which was in turn replaced by the more popular Italianate, simplified examples of which may be found in the district and throughout the City. All of these buildings, regardless of their decorative detailing, were executed in essentially the same size, scale, form, and construction material. They were generally no more than 25 feet wide, one to two stories in height, and different from each other only in their stylistic detailing and construction refinements.

The Middle Period encompassed the years in which San Francisco emerged as a mature metropolis. During this time, more refined and academic revival styles, such as the Colonial and Spanish Revival, began to appear in the City, and modest examples of this style are still found within the district. These buildings were usually somewhat larger than the earlier Telegraph Hill structures, but were nevertheless contained within a typical Telegraph Hill standard lot. Before this period ended, the style that came to be known as Art Deco had evolved out of European classicism and would soon appear on Telegraph Hill.

Early on in the Modern Period, cottages with marginal Craftsman detailing were favored on the Hill, but within a few years the architectural style and building scale found in the district changed radically. Following completion of the Montgomery/Alta and Union/Calhoun retaining walls that demolished many of the area's older structures and generated new development opportunities in the district (including the north side of Alta Street where the project site is located), contemporary architecture became the new standard for the area. The design of the Moderne apartment building at the project site and the Forbes Apartments at 60 Alta Street (both designed in 1935), represented an important break in the district's architectural and physical continuity. The most important structure of this period is the Kahn Residence at 70 Calhoun Terrace, designed by the renowned architect Richard Neutra. These buildings introduced a new, larger building size, scale and bulk, and a different architectural character.

The International Style and Moderne buildings were often the product of developers who had assembled lots, demolished smaller historic buildings, and built larger new buildings. This development style was later reinforced in the district by the designation of such buildings as Contributory structures and by Section 7(c)(1) of the designating ordinance, which encourages "new construction in a contemporary idiom." Due to the long span of the surviving construction on Telegraph Hill, a modest catalog of American architectural styles is represented, spanning the years from 1850 to the present. Found here are a single vestigial example of a Mid-Nineteenth Century Commercial building, as well as simplified Greek Revival, Carpenter Gothic, and Late Victorian Italianate buildings. Early 20th Century styles include Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and important works from the Modern and even the Post-Modern movements. Although the earliest of these buildings survived the ravages of the fire, many have been remodeled, some beyond recognition, thus limiting their ability to communicate their original

styles. Buildings that have been altered beyond recognition are generally not considered to be contributors to the district.

Guidelines

For all projects within a locally designated historic district (as provided for in Article 10 of the Planning Code) that involve new construction or visible exterior changes to an existing structure, a Certificate of Appropriateness is required. In the case of new construction, such as for the project site, the Planning Commission is required to hold a public hearing on the Certificate of Appropriateness application subsequent to an advisory report being submitted to the Planning Commission by the LPAB.

Section 7 of Appendix G to Article 10 sets forth specific guidelines for review of proposed changes within the district. These provisions pertain to character, height, and for new construction, issues such as style, landscaping, access, wooden walkways and steps, public rights-of-way, demolition, cliffs, and significance of individual buildings. Below is a brief summary of the relevant language as it relates to the proposed project:

• Character: a project shall be compatible with the character of the district, where character means the architectural features and historic open space of the district as referred to and described in the district case report.

• Height: buildings should relate to the height of structures immediately adjacent and in the general area with the intent that the building should be contained within an envelope that slopes upward or downward with the slope of the property.

• Style: projects shall be compatible with nearby Contributory buildings. Further, new construction in a contemporary idiom is encouraged, with specific regulation as follows:[4]

(a) Bay windows and porticos are discouraged.

(b) Porches and balconies are encouraged.

(c) Gable roof forms are encouraged.

(d) The mass of new buildings should relate to the topographical contour of the site, and be compatible with adjacent buildings.

(e) The use of horizontal rustic wood siding is encouraged over other surfacing materials. Masonry[5] surfaces may be appropriate in subareas with a concentration of Art Moderne or International Style building.

(f) Fenestration should be proportionate and in scale with traditional patterns within the district. Wooden sash is encouraged over aluminum or other metal sash.

(g) Detailing should relate to the simple, straight forward traditional vernacular forms found in the district.

[4] These characteristics do not apply uniformly to the diverse building styles and scales that contribute to the district nor do they serve to enforce reconstruction to a particular period or style.

[5] Presumably cement plaster - there are no masonry buildings in the district.

• Landscaping: a landscaping plan is required for every project and should ensure minimal interference with historic gardens.

• Access: access for construction is required to utilize existing paths, steps, and walkways. The project sponsor is required to replace landscaping features on public space that may be damaged during construction.

• Wooden Walkways and Steps: the Filbert Steps and boardwalk on Napier Lane shall be maintained as unique contributors to the setting of the district.

• Public Rights-of-Way: unimproved sections of public rights-of way shall be treated as open space. In such spaces gardens, both ornamental and natural, are encouraged.

• Cliffs: for projects involving construction on lots located within the designated cliff areas of the district, a geological study made by a licensed engineer is required.[6] Such projects will be assessed to determine whether they will have a reasonable probability of endangering life, limb, or property.

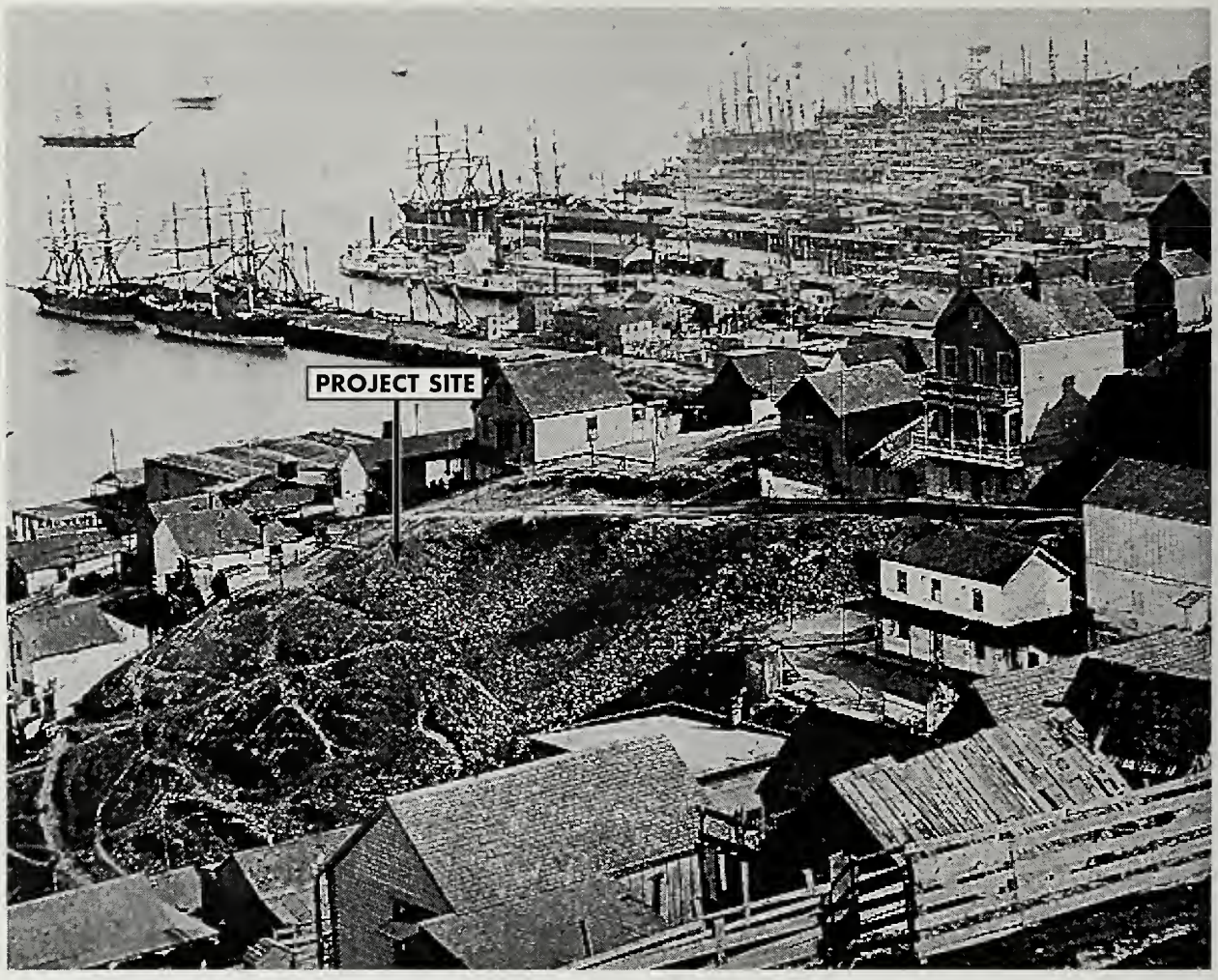
PROJECT SITE

As verified by historic photographs dating from 1862 through the 1920s, the site of 22-30 Alta Street was a barren and rolling hillside, crisscrossed with goat paths that existed essentially unchanged, until the Montgomery/Alta Street Roadway Construction project of 1931.[7] Figure 9 depicts the site and surrounding area in this condition in about 1862. The homes that now line the south side of Alta were occupied by stevedores and others associated with the shipping industry. These houses had an unobstructed view over the hillside (now the project site) that allowed the occupants to monitor the arrival of ships into San Francisco Bay, an activity that was important to their livelihood. See Figure 10 for a view of Alta Street in the 1920s before development on the north side of the street and Figure 11 for the same view of Alta Street in 1998. As a result of the cut and fill required by 1931 roadway construction, the north side of Alta became developable, and extensive new construction occurred along the previously barren hillside, radically altering its character. This new construction effectively bisected the original concentration of pre-1870s structures on the hill, and eliminated the waterfront view of the historic buildings on the south side of Alta Street. The north side of Alta Street at the eastern end had never been built upon, and beginning in 1935 with the construction of 22 Alta Street, the setting was almost completely transformed with the development of the many multi-story apartment buildings that exist there today. In addition to 22-30 Alta Street, the apartments at 60 Alta Street were built in 1935.

These buildings and the others on the north side of Alta Street were typically between four and six stories in height, with cement plaster (stucco) exterior surfaces. Only the two mentioned above were built during the district's Modern Period (1935-1941). The others were built later, and although they all share

[6] The project site is not located within the district's designated cliff areas.

[7] Information on the history and architecture of the buildings of the historic district is excerpted from the Telegraph Hill Historic District case report appendix, dated August 1985, prepared by Anne Bloomfield, and adopted as part of the ordinance (Article 10, Appendix G) that created the Telegraph Hill Historic District.



22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: San Francisco Maritime Museum

Figure 9
Alta Street, Circa 1862
(Looking Southeast)

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Society of California Pioneers.

Figure 10
Alta Street, 1920s
(Looking West to Montgomery Street)

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Patrick McGrew, Architect.

Figure 11
Alta Street, 1998
(Same View as Figure 10)

common architectural characteristics, the others are considered Non-contributing to the district because they were built after the district's period of significance. The two Contributory structures are architecturally and stylistically comparable with other Contributory and Non-contributory examples from the Modern period within the district, such as 1470 Montgomery Street and 38-50 Calhoun Terrace.

The 22-30 Alta Street site was created through a lot-split of a larger parcel that was owned by long-time Telegraph Hill resident Ian Hoeffler, described in the *City Directories* as a bookkeeper for the Montana Copper Company. He retained the lower portion of the lot that originally had the address 24 Alta Street, and developed the upper parcel as the three-unit 22-30 Alta Street apartment building in 1935. Hoeffler purchased and developed several other parcels clustered in the vicinity of the project site, including "the Compound" at 265 Union Street, and the Hoeffler Apartments at 38-50 Calhoun Terrace, another Contributory structure in the district, which became Hoeffler's home. The 22 Alta building was sold to Fred McNear, Jr, President of the Grass Valley Bullion Company, who subsequently remodeled it in 1937. This building is referred to as the McNear building throughout the rest of this document.

The architect of 22-30 Alta Street was Angus McSweeney, who apprenticed in the office of Willis Polk & Co., an important early San Francisco firm. McSweeney continued with the firm following Polk's death in 1924, but ultimately headed his own firm that is considered by some to be the successor firm to the Polk office. Eventually McSweeney took on partners, initially the firm became McSweeney and Schuppell, and later McSweeney, Ryan and Lee. McSweeney's portfolio includes a few period revival houses in St. Francis Wood, the Commodore Stockton School annex on Washington Street, the Commodore Sloat School on Ocean Avenue, the Park Merced housing complex, and St. Leo Roman Catholic Church of Sonoma. McSweeney was not known for innovative design, and most of his projects involved a joint venture designer from another firm. McSweeney's most important project was St. Mary's Cathedral on Geary Boulevard, a joint venture with brilliant designer Pietro Belluschi that was engineered by Pier Luigi Nervi. No other examples of McSweeney's Moderne work have yet surfaced, although a large archive of McSweeney's work was recently donated to the University of California at Berkeley architectural archive.

McSweeney's five-level wood frame building, containing 3,350 occupied square feet, rose one and one-half levels above Alta Street on the front facade, and descended three and one-half levels below grade, along the east elevation. Figure 12 depicts an architect's model of the McNear building in its built context. It was faced in cement plaster over wood sheathing, and the open stair was faced in shiplap siding. The handrails were painted wood, as were the window and door frames. The building stepped down the slope to the north and had terraces on four levels. An external staircase ran along side the building's east side.

The building survived for 57 years and was altered many times, ultimately containing five apartments in its final configuration. In 1992, the building was demolished by the City after being damaged as a result of heavy rains and roadwork the City was performing on Alta Street. It was the first building in the Telegraph Hill Historic District, since the district's creation, to be demolished.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Peter Pfau, Architect.

Figure 12
Model of 22-30 Alta Street As Built in 1935-1937

The 22-30 Alta Street structure was not listed or rated in any of the surveys recognized by the Planning Department, including the Department's *1976 Citywide Survey* or the *Here Today* survey of architecturally significant buildings. In 1985, with the adoption of the Telegraph Hill Historic District, the building was designated a Contributory structure, one of seven intact examples of the "innovative" buildings built during the Modern Period (1935-1941) of the district's development. With the demolition of the 22-30 Alta Street building, its value as architecture and history were irretrievably lost, leaving only the contextual value of its site as an historical resource.

IMPACTS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CEQA Section 21084.1 states that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource (in this case, the district) is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. This section defines "historical resource" as one that is listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources, and states that resources listed in a local register of historical resources "are presumed to be historically or culturally significant."

A "local register of historic resources" is defined in Public Resources Code Sec. 5020.1 as "a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution." A "substantial adverse change" is defined in Public Resources Code Sec. 5020.1 as "demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of an historical resource would be impaired."

The Telegraph Hill Historic District ordinance, Article 10, Appendix G, of the Planning Code includes guidelines as Certificate of Appropriateness review standards for new construction in the district. The Planning Commission will utilize these guidelines as a basis for determining whether or not to approve the project sponsor's Certificate of Appropriateness application. See the Guidelines discussion of this section above for the language of these guidelines. The guidelines for evaluation of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness are specific to that process and not directly comparable to CEQA significance criteria. Nonetheless, a project that would comply with these guidelines would not be expected to result in a significant effect on historic architectural resources.

EVALUATION OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Designation of the Telegraph Hill Historic District qualifies the district as being "listed in a local register of historic resources." Further, as noted above, all or part of the district is potentially eligible for nomination to the California Register or the National Register, and could be listed in either register as such. Therefore, under CEQA, the Telegraph Hill Historic District is considered an historical resource that is potentially subject to significant impact. Having established that the project site is located within and is part of an historical resource, the purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the proposed

project would result in a substantial adverse change to the Telegraph Hill Historic District such that the qualities that make it historically significant would be impaired or lost.

The height of the proposed building would be no more than five feet taller on both the Alta Street and Filbert Street elevations than the adjacent building (34 Alta Street) or the two buildings (40 and 50 Alta Street) immediately to the west of the adjacent building. The proposed structure would be taller than the McNear building (the former building on the project site), in part, due to the need to accommodate a Code-required parking garage. A parking garage would be located at street level (overall level four) with space for five automobiles. Although the McNear building did not include any parking spaces, Section 151 of the Planning Code requires that a minimum of one off-street parking space be provided for each new dwelling unit constructed.

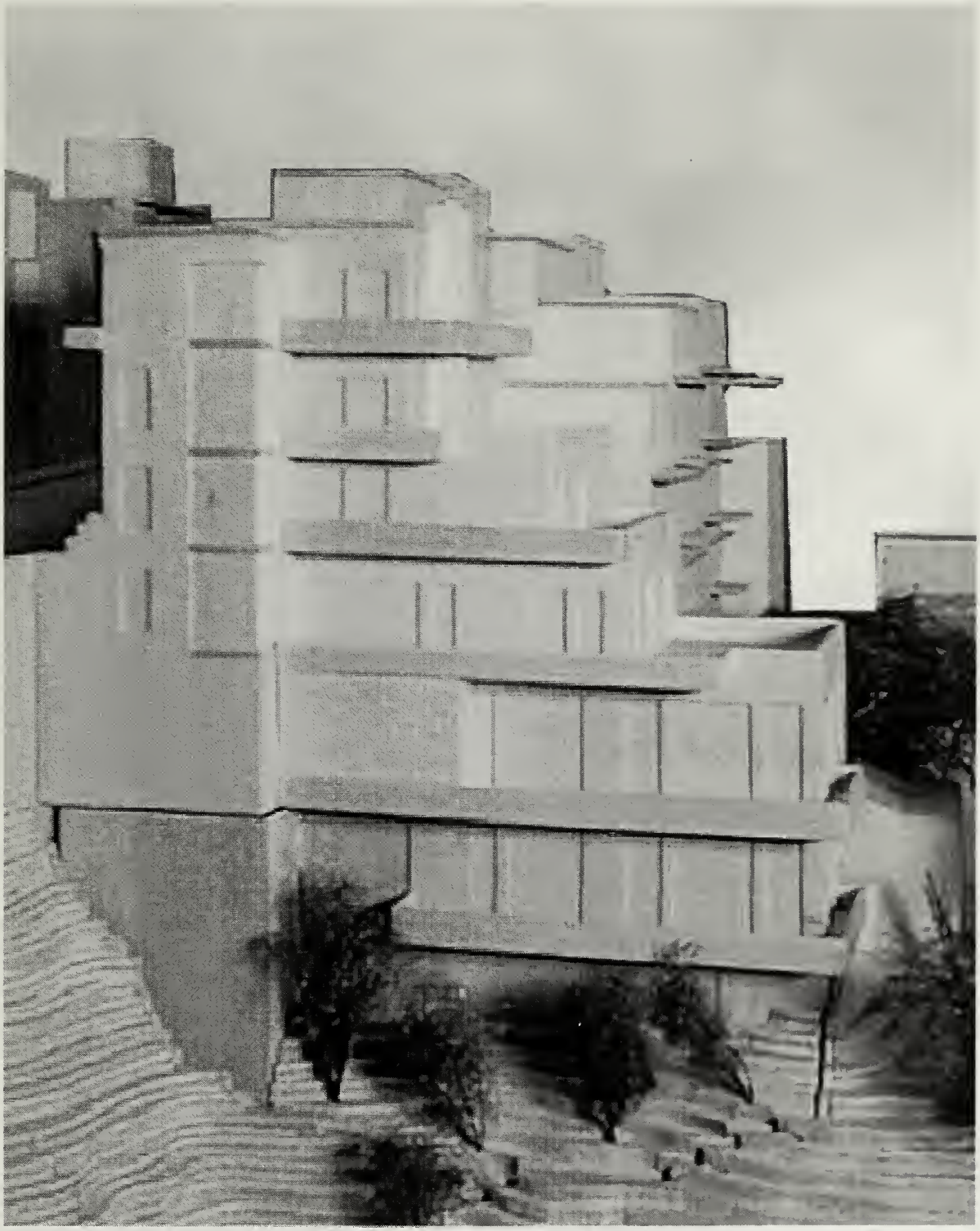
Compared to the McNear building, the proposed project would appear as if an additional story were placed in the middle of the prior building, between levels two and three, resulting in increased height and depth at each of levels three through five and a new level six. The new building would also extend seven feet farther deep (north) into the lot at levels one and two, compared to the prior building (compare Figures 12 and 13). The McNear building was smaller than other existing buildings on the north side of Alta Street, while the proposed project would be similar in height to those other structures.

The Planning Code does not address building width of proposed new construction, but calls for massing of new buildings to "relate to the topographical contour of the site and be compatible with adjacent buildings (Article 10, Appendix G, Section 7(d)." The project would step down the sloping hillside site following the slope's contours, although would be more massive than the adjacent structures.

The width of the project site is 62.5 feet, more than double that of a typical parcel in the district. The proposed project would involve development of only the west portion of the parcel, and would separate the main mass of the building (34 feet wide) from the building stair tower (11 feet wide) on the east elevation. The proposed project would be approximately 10 feet wider than the McNear building.

The overall effect of the proposed project would be an increase in height of approximately one story, width of approximately 10 feet, and 4,465 square feet of enclosed space (including 2,240 square feet of parking) when compared to the McNear building (see Figures 12 and 13). Nevertheless, because the project site is within a sub-area of the district that contains large, non-contributory buildings, the project's increased volume would not be incompatible with adjacent construction. Because the project site is relatively large, compared to other lots in the district, the proposed structure would have a smaller percentage of lot coverage than most other buildings in the district, as did the previous building. See Section III.D, Shadows for a comparison of the shadows cast by the project and the previous building.

According to the project architect, the proposed design is intended, in part, to recall the McNear building previously on the site, and to meet the compatibility requirements of the Certificate of Appropriateness. Specifically, the exterior finish of the proposed structure would match the cement plaster of the previous building, several other buildings on Alta Street, and other Contributory Moderne buildings in the district,



22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Peter Pfau, Architect.

Figure 13
Model of Proposed Project

including the similar 1470 Montgomery Street and 50 Calhoun Terrace buildings. The window and door frames, terraces, pipe railings and rounded corners would also be stylistically consistent with the previous building and the district's other Moderne structures.

The project would be in keeping with the character of the district in terms of its residential use, Moderne style, and its orientation to the steep site. In fact, page one of the case report statement of significance states in reference to the Moderne and International Style buildings in the district: "This change in style, scale, and pattern of development completes the district's period of significance."[8] However, the proposed building would be wider and taller on the northern and eastern elevations than structures immediately adjacent to it and in the general area. Because the district is a collection of buildings with diverse architectural styles and building forms within a small area, the larger size of the project would make it visually prominent compared to many of the nearby buildings

Planning Code Article 10, Appendix G, Section 7(c), states that new construction "shall be compatible with the nearby Contributory buildings within the historic district" and conform to several style directives as noted above. This statement does not differentiate among the variety of architectural styles of those buildings and, as such, some of the guidelines are not applicable to modern style buildings. The proposed building would, for the most part, be in conformance with the style guidelines; however, the project would include bay windows despite the guidelines discouragement of such features. The proposed building would be different than nearby Contributory buildings, either in terms of style or mass. There are three Contributory buildings that are either adjacent to or across Alta Street from the project site and ten others within a 100-foot radius from the project property. Of these 13 buildings, only one is of a Modern architectural style and a majority are Italianate in design. Further, all of these structures are substantially smaller in terms of overall mass and floor area than is the proposed project.

The project would have the potential to affect non-architectural components of the historic district, including the Grace Marchant Garden, Filbert Steps, and a cliff face. Potential effects, particularly as they pertain to the Garden, are addressed in this EIR separately in sections for issues regarding land use (section III.A), visual quality (section III.C), shadows (section III.D), geology (section III.E), and biology (section III.F).

CONCLUSION

The project's impact would not result in substantial modifications to the historic district as a whole, nor would it result in a compromise in the integrity or significance of any of the adjacent buildings that are identified as Contributory to the district. This conclusion is substantiated by three primary factors. First, the relative size of the proposed project represents a nominal change to the district's setting. Since the proposed project involves the construction of a single code-complying structure on a single piece of property within an historic district that includes eighty structures and covers many blocks, the resultant

[8] The term "change" refers to the shift from pre-1931 architectural styles (vernacular cottages, Italianate. etc.) to post-1931 development in Modern styles.

change is insufficiently large to compromise the significance of the district itself or to affect the significance of other surrounding properties in any meaningful way.

Second, as a replacement for a lost Contributory structure, the project would not irreparably or substantially alter the historic setting as a character-defining feature of the district or the nearby buildings. The proposed design, which includes the use of materials and features that recall the previous contributing structure, would result in a building that is stylistically compatible with the district. While the proposed building would provide parking, and would be taller, wider, and enclose more square footage than it predecessor, the degree of change would be insufficient to adversely affect any neighboring building's Contributory status.

Third, as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness process, the proposed project is subject to review and approval by the Director of City Planning and/or the City Planning Commission acting with advice from LPAB. As such, the project would be closely evaluated for its compatibility with the guidelines set forth in Appendix G of Article 10 of the Planning Code. The proposed design would be in conformance with most of the guidelines included in Article 10.

Because of the project's relative size compared to the district, its stylistic compatibility with the McNear building and the district, and the fact that it would be subject to the Certificate of Appropriateness review process, the proposed project would not substantially impact the character of the district. Because of the unique circumstances under which the project would be developed (i.e., replacement of a prior building demolished by the City) and the lack of buildable sites in the vicinity, the project would not contribute to any cumulative changes in the historic architectural fabric of the Telegraph Hill Historic District.

C. VISUAL

INTRODUCTION

Although there no are significant visual impacts expected to result from the proposed project (as discussed in the Initial Study), this section has been added for informational purposes and to provide context for the evaluation of project impacts on the Telegraph Hill Historic District and its unique features, including the Filbert Steps and Grace Marchant Garden. This section addresses existing visual conditions and the potential for the project to affect those conditions, focusing on aesthetics and views from public areas. Compatibility of the project with the Telegraph Hill Historic District, including the potential for related impacts caused by the design of the structure, whether due to architectural style or physical size, is discussed in section III.B, Historic Architectural Resources.

SETTING

Visual Character

The project site is a rectangular property that is bordered by Alta Street to the south and the Filbert Street right-of-way to the north. The site is currently vacant except for the foundation remains of a previous apartment building that was razed by the City in 1992, referred to herein as the McNear building. These irregular concrete protrusions partially overgrown with weeds are at the southwest portion of the site just below (north of) Alta Street (see Figure 39). The rectangular site slopes very steeply down the face of Telegraph Hill to the north, dropping more than 60 feet vertically over its 120-foot horizontal length. The eastern edge of the site drops precipitously over the cliff towards Sansome Street below.

The northwestern portion of the site, as described in greater detail in section III.F, Biology, is a tended ornamental garden area that is part of the Grace Marchant Garden. This hilly area, less steep than the southern or eastern portions of the site, is densely covered by a diversity of plant life, including one large tree, a few smaller trees, and numerous other smaller plants. Most of the northeastern portion of the site is covered by a thick, dense untended brush that serves as a natural backdrop to the ornamental Garden when viewed from the Filbert Street right-of-way. The Garden is composed of a variety of species and sizes of plants located both on and adjacent to the project site. The Garden is a focal point of visual interest and serves to obscure from public view (specifically from the Filbert Steps) much of the vacant project site.

The project site is among multi-story residential buildings on Alta and Montgomery Streets, which are two to four stories on their street frontages and up to six stories tall on their downslope elevations. The buildings in the immediate area range from small vernacular wood cottages, such as 221 Filbert Street, to large Moderne cement plaster buildings such as 1360 Montgomery Street. Some of the buildings on Alta Street have balconies or fire escapes facing the street, some have bay windows, and some have simple flat facades. Some are of a contemporary design style, while others on the south side of the street were

built during, and maintain the style of, the early part of the century. Almost all of the buildings on Alta Street are built out to the property line (see Figure 11).

Adjacent to the project site (to the north) and the adjoining Grace Marchant Garden, are the Filbert Steps, which, along with the Garden, are an important visual feature of the neighborhood. The wooden Filbert Steps run nearly the length of the Filbert Street right-of-way (between Montgomery Street and the cliff) and afford pedestrians views of the Bay, the Garden, and many of the structures in the immediate area of the project site. The prominent cliff faces of Telegraph Hill, on its north and northeastern sides, are also important visual aspects of the project area. The eastern edge of the project site and the adjacent parcel (to the east) are on a steep cliff rock face that drops dramatically to the rear of an office building (201 Filbert Street) located at the intersection of Filbert and Sansome Streets.

Views of Site

There are three primary vantage points from which the site can be viewed: the intersection of Sansome and Filbert Streets, the Filbert Steps, and Alta Street east of Montgomery Street. The most distant of these three views is from Sansome Street at the eastern base of Telegraph Hill just north of Filbert Street. Between 201 Filbert Street and 1301 Sansome Street, a narrow view of the lower portion of the Filbert Steps, the cliff face of the property adjacent to the project site, the northern edge of the project site, most of 34 Alta Street (the building immediately west of the site), the north elevation of 40 Alta Street and the very top portions of two buildings on the south side of Alta Street across from the site are visible (see Figure 14).[1]

From this same vantage point prior to 1992, when the now demolished McNear building was located on the project site, the McNear building almost entirely blocked the view of the eastern face of 34 Alta Street. A portion of the project site currently visible was instead occupied by the lower (northern) portion of the building.

The middle range of the three views, in terms of distance to the site, is from the Filbert Steps. From just east of Napier Lane to just east of Darrell Place, views of varying breadth and clarity are available to pedestrians moving along the Steps. The most expansive view from the Steps is available between Napier Lane and Darrell Place where the view blockage from a large tree on the site and trees in the Garden to the west of the site is minimized (see Figure 16). From this viewpoint, the Garden is visible in the foreground. Most of 221 Filbert Street (the small cottage adjacent to the west of the project site) is visible, as are the top halves of 34, 40 and 50 Alta Street, the buildings that line the north side of Alta Street to the west of the site. Two of the buildings on the south side of Alta Street (16 and 18 Alta Street), directly across the street from the site, are also partially visible above the retaining wall that abuts the project site.

[1] The view from this general vantage point changes depending upon where along Sansome Street a person is standing, however the image shown in Figure 14 depicts the most inclusive perspective of the project site.

Note: Image color and size have been modified by ESA to fit this format.

SOURCE: Previsualists Unlimited

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 14

Existing View from Filbert and Sansome Streets (Looking Southwest)

Note: Image color and size have been modified by ESA to fit this format.

SOURCE: Previsualists Unlimited

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 15

Proposed View from Filbert and Sansome Streets
(Looking Southwest)

Note: Image color and size have been modified by ESA to fit this format.

SOURCE: Previsualists Unlimited

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 16
Existing View from Filbert Steps
(Looking South)

Note: Image color and size have been modified by ESA to fit this format.

SOURCE: Previsualists Unlimited

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 17

Proposed View from Filbert Steps
(Looking South)

Prior to 1992, this view was noticeably different due to the presence of the McNear building. At that time, the buildings on the south side of Alta Street, the retaining wall, and a patch of sky between the top of the south side buildings and the primary roofline of those on the north side of the street adjacent to the project site were not visible. Instead, the view was of the three tiered planes of the glass and cement plaster McNear building.

The closest (and least frequently seen) of the three public views is that from Alta Street up or down the block from the project site. The site is at the end of a dead-end street that continues less than 30 feet to the east of the site. The site is at least partially visible from much of the south side of the block east of Montgomery Street. Looking east towards the site, an expansive view of the Bay, Yerba Buena and Treasure Islands, the East Bay hills, and a few San Francisco piers is available. Looking northwest to the site from the east end of Alta Street, the retaining wall that currently runs the length of the sidewalk in front of the site is seen in the foreground. The east face of the adjacent 34 Alta Street building is prominent from this viewpoint, as are portions of a number of other buildings located within the historic district in the distance (see Figure 18).

IMPACTS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The existing visual character of the site and surroundings is determined by the attributes of specific features and patterns that the features have assumed as a result of natural and/or cultural processes. Evaluation of potential project impacts on the existing visual character of the site and surroundings requires analysis of the elements of the project that would be introduced and how those changes (separately or collectively) would affect the character of the site and views of it from off-site locations. Impacts to the visual quality or character of a site may occur as a result of substantial demonstrable negative aesthetic effects, substantially degraded or obstructed scenic views or vistas from public areas, and the production of new substantial light or glare.

AESTHETIC EFFECTS

The project would result in a visual change to the site and the Telegraph Hill neighborhood/historic district. The six-story (two stories above grade) structure would be primarily Moderne in style and finished in cement plaster. Elements of the building would include pipe railings, bay windows (on the south facade), terraces at each level, tiered massing, a flat roof, rounded corners, metal window and door frames, a cement plaster finish, and a glassblock enclosed stairwell.

The design of the proposed structure would generally be in conformance with the style guidelines set forth in Article 10, Appendix G of the Planning Code and would adhere to the Code-stated encouragement that new construction be of a "contemporary idiom." The project would not be of a style similar to that of most of the buildings immediately surrounding the project site, although would share design characteristics with other Modern buildings in the neighborhood. Potential impacts related to the

Note: Image color and size have been modified by ESA to fit this format.

SOURCE: Previsualists Unlimited

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 18
Existing View from Alta Street
(Looking Northwest)

Note: Image color and size have been modified by ESA to fit this format.

SOURCE: Previsualists Unlimited

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 19
Proposed View from Alta Street
(Looking Northwest)

project's compatibility with the Telegraph Hill Historic District are discussed in detail in section III.B, Historic Architectural Resources.

Because the project would not visually alter the overall residential character of the existing neighborhood, be of such a scale as to stand out from locations other than those with direct views of the site, or introduce building materials or an architectural style that are foreign to the surrounding neighborhood, the project would not result in a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect.

EFFECTS ON VIEWS

The proposed structure would be 32 feet tall on the Alta Street elevation, 73 feet tall on the north elevation, and 82 feet tall on the east elevation. The main mass of the building would be 34 feet wide, and when measuring along its south elevation where the glassblock enclosed stairwell is located, the building would be a total of 45 feet wide. The contour of the building would include four separate wall planes, including three tiers with no continuous building plane of more than about 30 feet. Terraces would be located off of each the building's six levels.

For each of the three primary vantage points of the site discussed above, computer-generated photosimulations have been prepared in order to describe the level of visual impact that would occur as a result of the proposed project. Each of the simulations has been inserted into the photographs shown in Figures 14, 16, and 18, and therefore these photos serve as the "before" image for each of the corresponding "after" simulations.

From the most distant of the three views, at the intersection of Sansome and Filbert Streets, the view of the project site would be changed as demonstrated in Figure 15. From this vantage point, at least a portion of all six levels of the proposed building would be visible, including the entire north elevation of the mass that composes the lowest two levels. Most of the visible portions of the building would appear above the roofline of the seven-story 201 Filbert Street office building in the foreground. The southern elevation would not be visible, nor would any point where the building meets the ground. The lower portion of the east elevation would be blocked by 201 Filbert Street, although most of the glass-block enclosed stairwell would be visible, as would at least some of the east facing windows on all but the lowest level. Approximately three-quarters of the building's overall mass would be visible from this viewpoint.

From this vantage point, the proposed structure would block views of the east elevation of 34 Alta Street, almost all of the north elevations of 34 and 40 Alta Street, the very top of a building across Alta Street from the site, and a patch of open sky. A viewer of the site from this perspective would see the proposed building relatively closer than the slightly more distant existing structures. When compared to pre-1992 conditions when the McNear building was located on the site, the project would result in only a minimal change.

From the middle range view, on the Filbert Steps between Napier Lane and Darrell Place, the view of the project site would be changed as demonstrated in Figure 17. From this vantage point, the north elevation and lower portion of the west elevation (north of the adjacent structure) of the proposed structure would be visible. The south and east elevations would not be visible. Much of the north elevation would be obscured by an existing large tree located at the southern edge of the Grace Marchant Garden within the project site, but if the tree were to someday be removed, the entire façade of the lower mass would be visible. Each of the building's tiers would be visible, although because of the steep slope of the site (and thus the lower elevation of the vantage point), much of the face of each of the upper building planes would be partially obscured. The windows on the lowest tier of the building would be visible (except where obscured by the existing tree, which changes depending upon exactly where the viewer stands), as would part of the windows on the highest tier. Approximately half of the building's overall mass would be visible from this viewpoint.

From this vantage point, the proposed structure would block views of the vacant project site, the Alta Street retaining wall, the upper portions of buildings on the south side of Alta Street (17 and 19 Alta), and a patch of open sky. Views of the cottage at 221 Filbert Street and the buildings on the north side of Alta Street would not be altered. Views of the Grace Marchant Garden in the foreground would also not be altered, although visitors to the Garden would have less open sky and more building mass in their viewshed when looking up towards the project site. The building would appear as an eastward extension of the existing building wall on the north side of Alta Street, and would not substantially detract from the visual experience of the Garden. When compared to pre-1992 conditions when the McNear building was located on the site, the project would result in only a minimal change.

From the closest of the three views, on Alta Street looking northwest to the site, the view of the project site would be changed as demonstrated in Figure 19. From this vantage point, the entire south elevation of the proposed building would be visible, as would part of the east elevation. Because the project drops down to the east and north, only the top three and a half levels of the enclosed stairwell and part of the fourth level would be visible on the east elevation. To a viewer from this vantage point, the full 32-foot height of the building's south elevation would be visible, and a similar height would be visible of the east elevation, although most of the lower part of the building would not be visible. The roof of the proposed structure would not be visible. Approximately one third of the building's overall mass would be visible from this viewpoint.

From this vantage point, the proposed structure would block views of the upper portion of the east elevation of 34 Alta Street, other buildings within the neighborhood in the distance, and a patch of open sky. From the viewpoint of looking eastward to the site from Alta Street, part of the view of the Bay, East Bay hills, Yerba Buena and Treasure Islands, and San Francisco piers would be obstructed. Compared to pre-1992 conditions when the McNear building was located on the site, the project would result in only a minimal change.

Although noticeable, the changes to the site and surrounding areas as a result of the proposed project would be comparable to the results of the development on other sloping sites in San Francisco. Because view blockage would generally be limited to portions of adjacent and nearby building, the above changes would not be considered to substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas. The partial obstruction of views dominated by typical urbanized uses would not be considered substantial impairment of existing scenic views or vistas. The most impaired view, looking eastward from Alta Street west of the site, is not a commonly viewed viewpoint. Further, essentially the same view would remain from slightly to the east on Alta Street.

LIGHT AND GLARE

The proposed structure would have a primarily cement plaster exterior in addition to metal window and door frames, glass windows, a glassblock enclosed stairwell, and metal pip railings. The project would increase the amount of light emitted from the project site, when compared to existing and pre-1992 conditions, but would not substantially increase ambient light levels in the project area. Further, light and glare produced from the proposed project would be typical of residential apartments nearby and throughout the City. The project would not produce obtrusive glare that would substantially affect other properties.

D. SHADOW

SETTING

EXISTING CONDITIONS (VACANT SITE)

The proposed 22-30 Alta Street Apartments, located on Lot 34A of Assessor's Block 106, would be constructed on the site of the former McNear that was constructed in 1935 and demolished in 1992. The project site is among multi-story residential buildings on Alta and Montgomery Streets, that are two to four stories on their Alta Street frontages and up to six stories tall on their downslope facades. The project site is south of and adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way, within which is located the Filbert Steps and the adjoining Grace Marchant Garden (Garden).

In the broadest terms, the informal boundaries of the Garden can be defined as Darrell Place to the west, just past Napier Lane to the east, the Filbert Steps to the north, and following an irregular line into the northern portions of properties lining Alta and Filbert Streets (see Figure 38). The Garden can roughly be visually and functionally described as having two primary sections, eastern and western. The most intensively maintained, colorful, and visual center of the Garden is its eastern section immediately south of the Filbert Steps east (and slightly west) of Napier Lane, and continuing onto the hillside on the northern corner of the project site and the northern portions of the two private parcels adjacent to the west. The western portion of the Garden is the area to the west of the central section, to the east of Darrell Place, between the Filbert Steps and the buildings lining the Filbert Street right-of-way on the south. The Garden includes the northern portion of some of the privately owned lots adjacent to the southern edge of the right-of-way, including the project site. Because the project would create almost no new shadow on the western portion of the Garden except potentially on its eastern edge during the morning in the winter, the term "Garden," as it is used in the rest of this section, refers only to the eastern portion of the Garden.

The project site area slopes steeply down from Alta Street to the north toward the Filbert Steps; the land also slopes downward to the east towards Sansome Street.[1] The existing steep slopes strongly affect the lengths (and duration) of the shadows cast by the buildings fronting both streets. As a result of the topography of the hill and the existing line of residential buildings fronting Alta Street, much of the Garden and the Filbert Steps, as well as much of the yards of the site and residences adjacent to the site and the Garden, are in shadow all day during the two months from late November until late January and are in shadow after mid-day for another 12 weeks — six weeks from late January until early March and six weeks from early October until late November. Thus, these areas, including the Garden, currently receive no sun after mid-day from early October until early March.

[1] Topographic information used for this analysis was taken from a topographic survey map, dated June 16, 1995 and revised January 22, 1996, prepared by Martin M. Ron Associates, Land Surveyors.

From early March until early October, the morning sun clears the roofs of the residential buildings on Alta Street and the Garden area remains in sunlight until the sun drops below the buildings and trees along Montgomery Street, which occurs generally after 3:00 p.m. PST[2] in early March until late April, and in late August until early October, and generally after 4:00 p.m. PST from late April until late August.

Thus, the north slope of the project site, adjoining yards and the Garden are in full shade for about two months of the year, in afternoon shade for another three months, and in sun for seven to ten hours a day for the other seven months of the year under existing conditions, with no building on the project site.

PRE-1992 CONDITIONS (PREVIOUS BUILDING ON SITE)

The shadow conditions when the McNear building was located on the site were similar to those existing shadow conditions as described above. The exception is that the McNear building added shadow to the Garden and adjoining areas for an interval of about 1.5 hours before mid-day during the two 6-week intervals — from late January until early March and from early October until late November. Thus, these areas, including the Garden, received no sun after about 10:15 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. PST, instead of after mid-day under current conditions.

The McNear building did not cast shadow on the Garden during the two months of the year when the Garden is currently in shade. Nor did the prior building cast shadow on the Garden during the interval from early March until early October, when the Garden is now in full sun from morning until mid-afternoon.

SUNLIGHT ORDINANCE

Section 295 of the City Planning Code, the Sunlight Ordinance, was adopted through voter approval of Proposition K (passed in November 1984) in order to protect certain public open spaces from shadowing by new structures during the period between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset, year round. Section 295 restricts new shadow upon public spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structure exceeding 40 feet unless the City Planning and Recreation and Park Commissions find the impact to be insignificant. Section 295 would not apply to the proposed project, which would be less than 40 feet in height (measured according to the Planning Code), and which would not add new shadow to properties under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department.

IMPACTS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

As noted, the proposed project would be exempt from Planning Code Section 295. For purposes of this report, the project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would alter sun shading effects so

[2] All times given in this analysis are standard time. During daylight savings time, the clock time is one hour later.

as to substantially affect public areas, change the climate in the immediate community or broader region, or disrupt or adversely affect an historic resource.

EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

The shadow conditions with the project were compared to conditions with the site vacant, as it is currently, and with the McNear building located on the site. The difference in shadow effects caused by the project when compared to the vacant site in its current condition is that the project would add shadow to the Garden and adjoining areas for an interval of about two hours (10:00 a.m. to noon PST) during two six-week intervals — from late January until early March and from early October until late November. Currently, the Garden and adjoining area receive no sun after mid-day under existing conditions. When compared to conditions with the McNear building on the site, the project would result in 30 additional minutes (10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. PST) of shadow during the same two six-week periods. The extent of new shadow at various times of the day and during different seasons is discussed below.

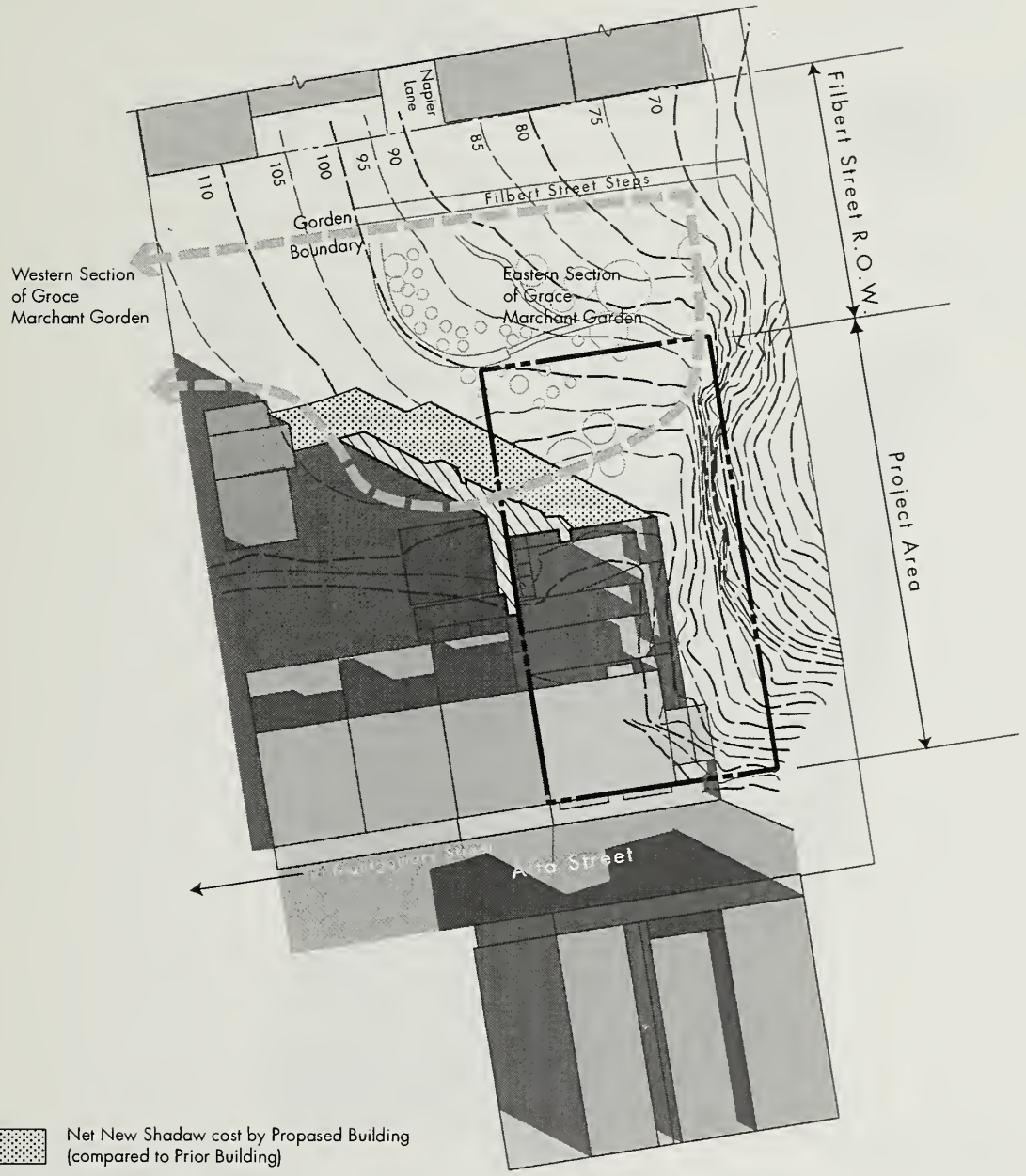
The project would add no new shadow during the two months of the year when the Garden is currently in shade. Nor would the project add new shadow to the Garden during the interval from early March until early October, when the Garden is currently in full sun from morning until mid-afternoon. Accordingly, the Initial Study for the proposed project concluded that the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on the biology of the Grace Marchant Garden. For more detailed information regarding the potential impacts of the project on biological resources in the Garden as a result of additional shadow, see the discussion in section III.F, Biology, that has been added for informational purposes.

To demonstrate the potential for new shadow caused by the proposed project in comparison to existing and pre-1992 conditions, a series of standard shadow images was projected for times of 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12 Noon, and 3:00 p.m., on each of four days of the year — the Winter Solstice, Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox. The images (Figures 20-35) show the shadow cast by existing buildings and topography, the shadow cast by the McNear building, and the shadow that would be cast by the proposed project.

Referring to Figures 20-35, the shadow coverage from the proposed project would be greater than at present, with no building on the site, and similar in extent to that from the McNear building.

December

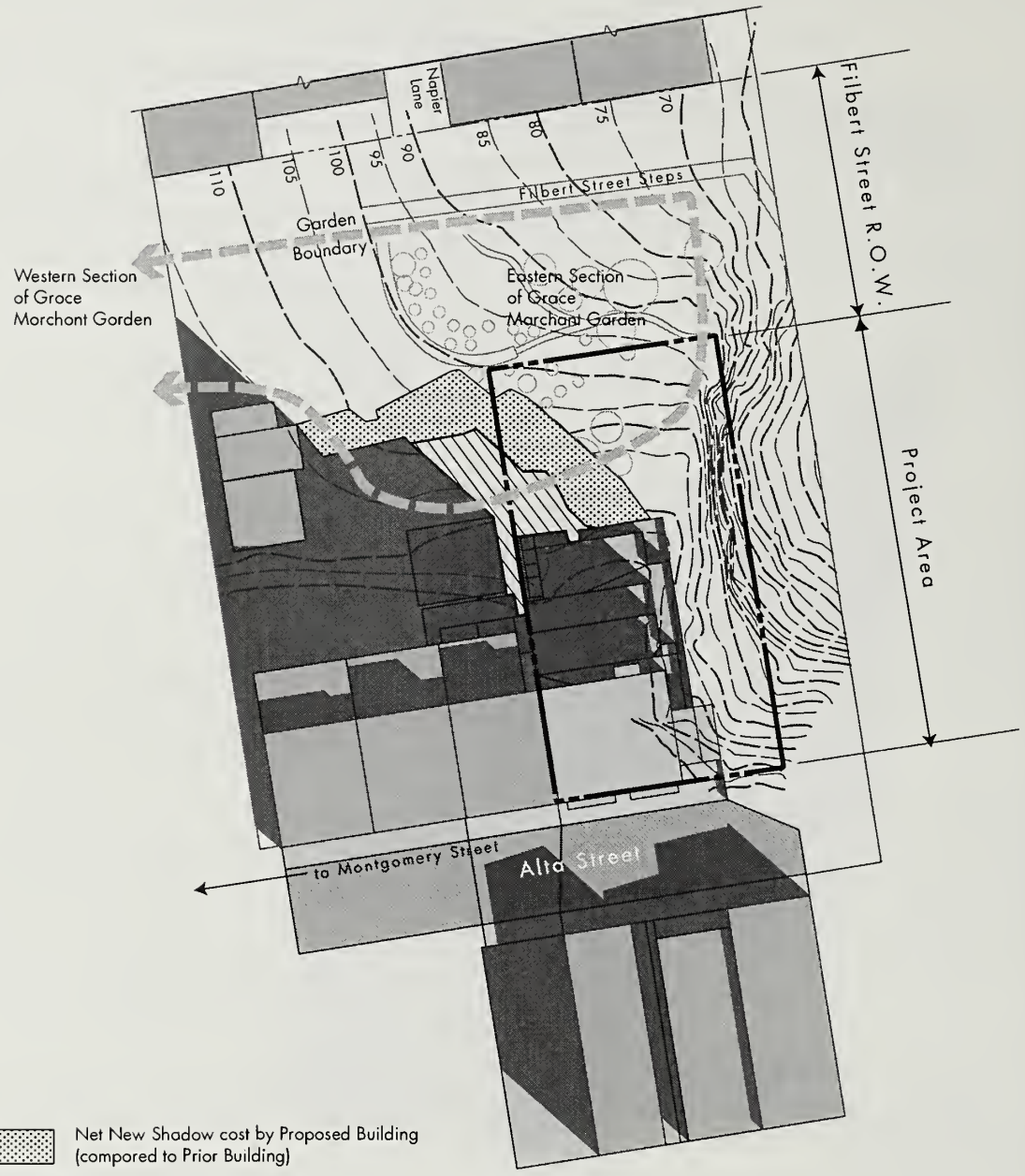
As described above, the site's steep slopes and the existing buildings along Alta and Montgomery Streets cause a substantial amount of existing shadow in the afternoon hours at present. In December, existing shadow, with no building on the site, covers portions of the Filbert Steps at 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. (see Figures 32 and 33). The same was true with the prior building in place and would be true with the proposed project. This is the only one of the four solstice/equinox dates when shadow from the proposed project would reach into the Filbert Street right-of-way, north of the project lot; on this day, shadow from



22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 20
Proposed Design Shadows
March 21 - 9 am



22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 21
Proposed Design Shadows
March 21 - 10 am

A Net New Shadow cast by Proposed Building (compored to Priar Building)

B Shodow cost by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shodow compared to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

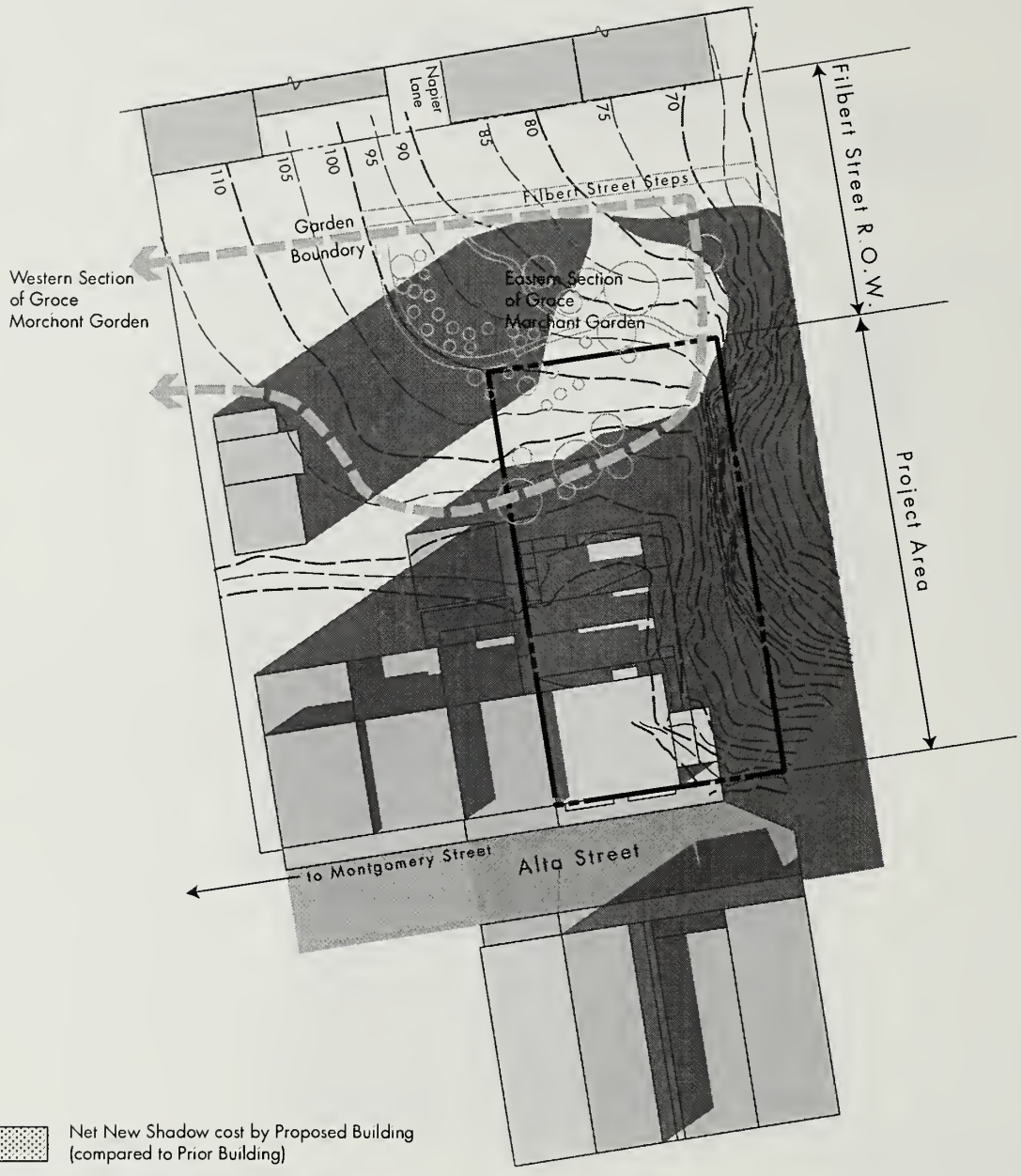
Existing Shodows (Shodow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shadaw)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 22
Proposed Design Shadows
March 21 - 12 noon



A — Net New Shadow cost by Proposed Building (compared to Prior Building)

B — Shodow cost by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shodow compored to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

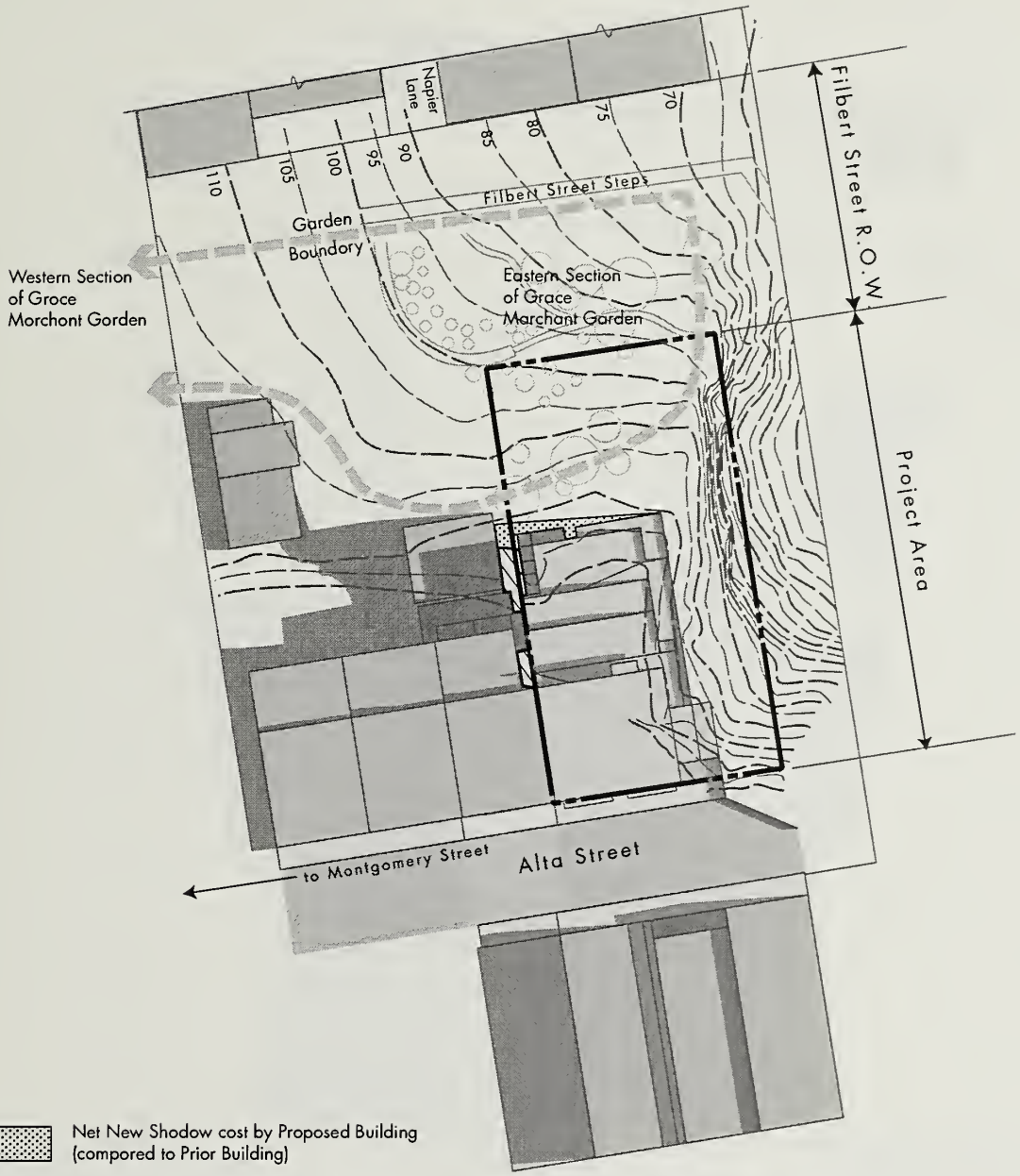
Existing Shodows (Shodow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shadow)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 23
Proposed Design Shadows
March 21 - 3pm



A — Net New Shodow cost by Proposed Building (compored to Prior Building)

B — Shodow cost by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shodow compored to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

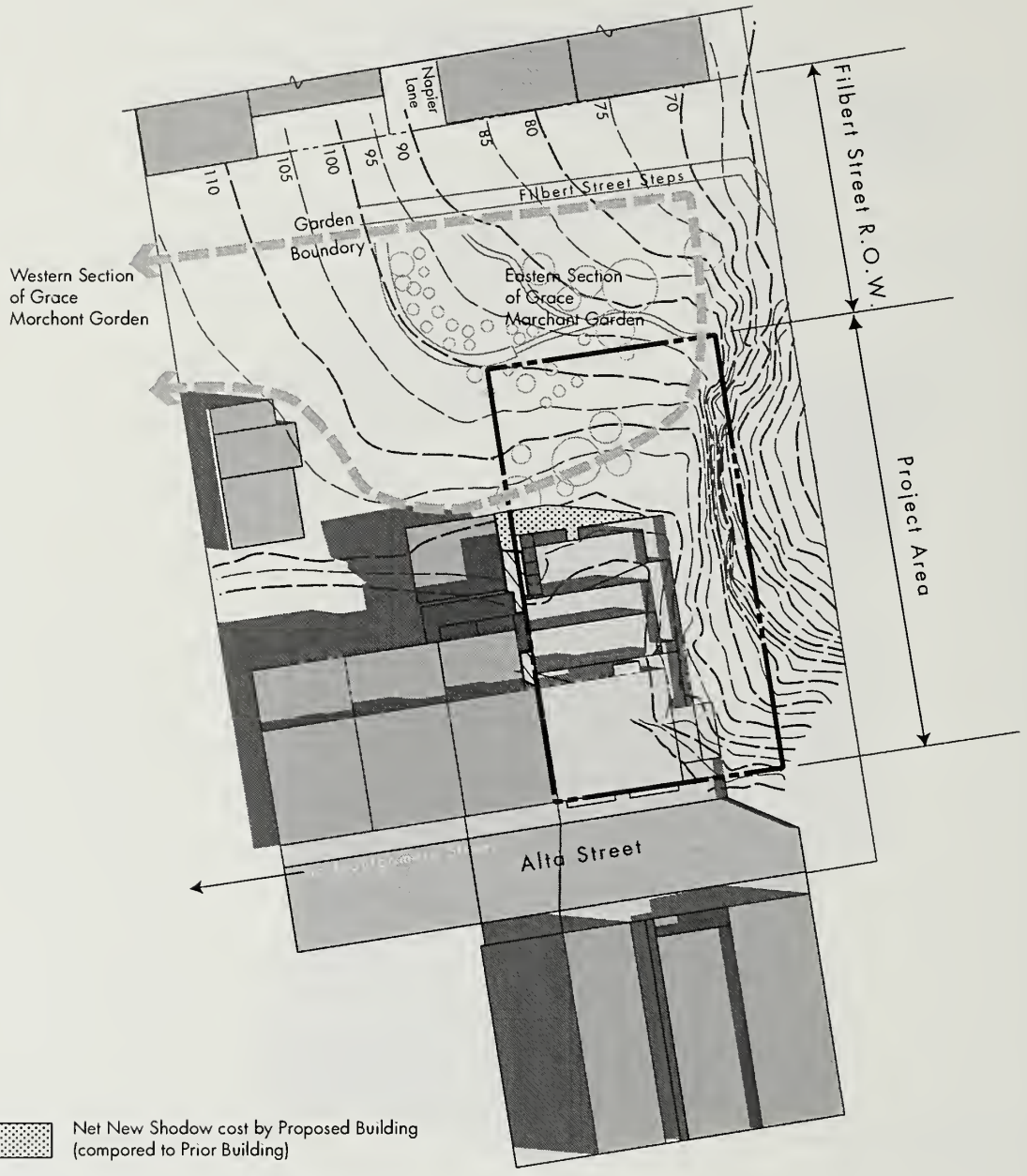
Existing Shodows (Shodow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shodow)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

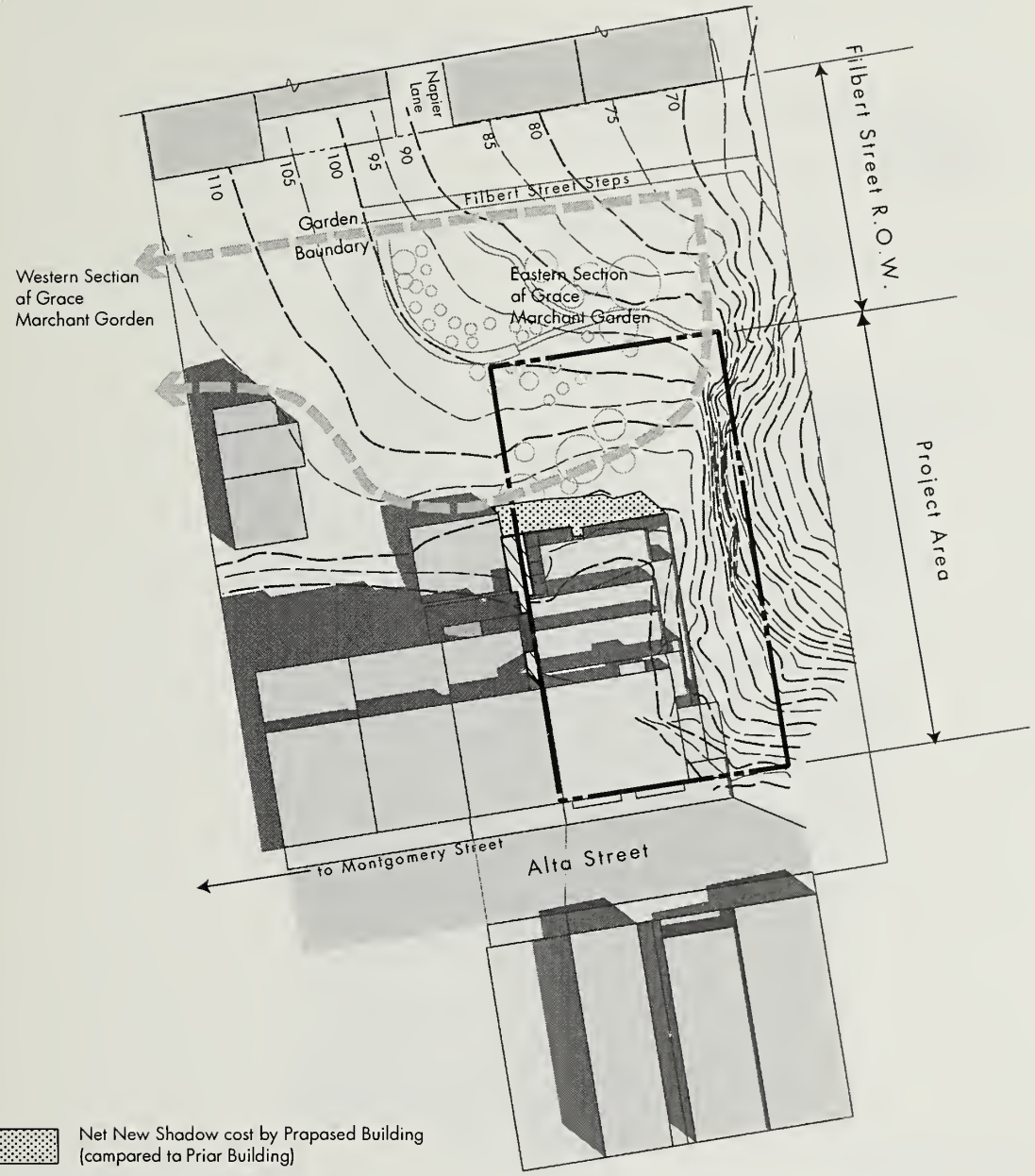
Figure 24
Proposed Design Shadows
June 21 - 9 am



22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 25
Proposed Design Shadows
June 21 - 10 am



A — Net New Shadow cast by Proposed Building (compared to Prior Building)

B — Shadow cast by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shadow compared to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

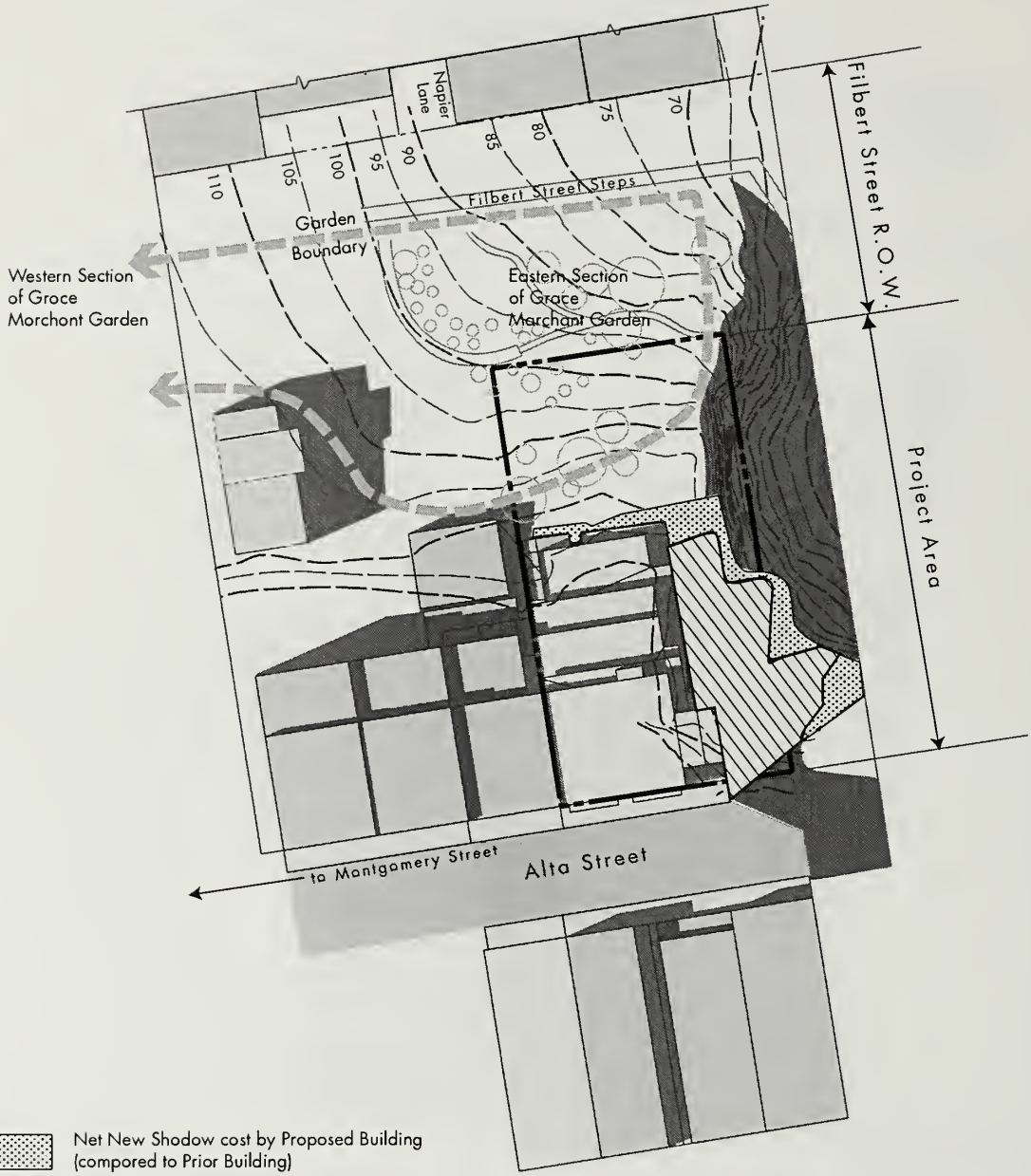
Existing Shadows (Shadow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shodow)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

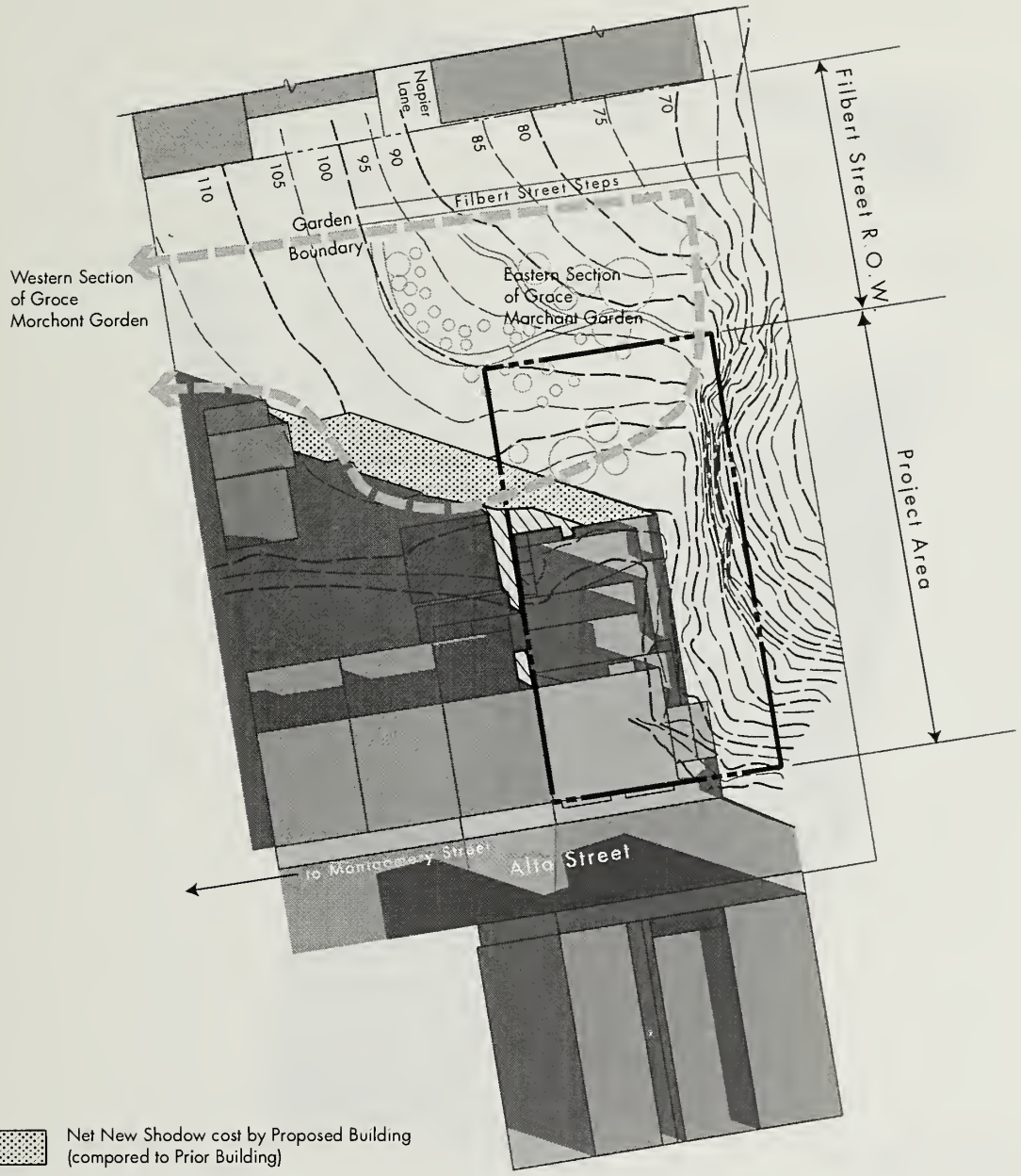
Figure 26
Proposed Design Shadows
June 21 - 12 noon



22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

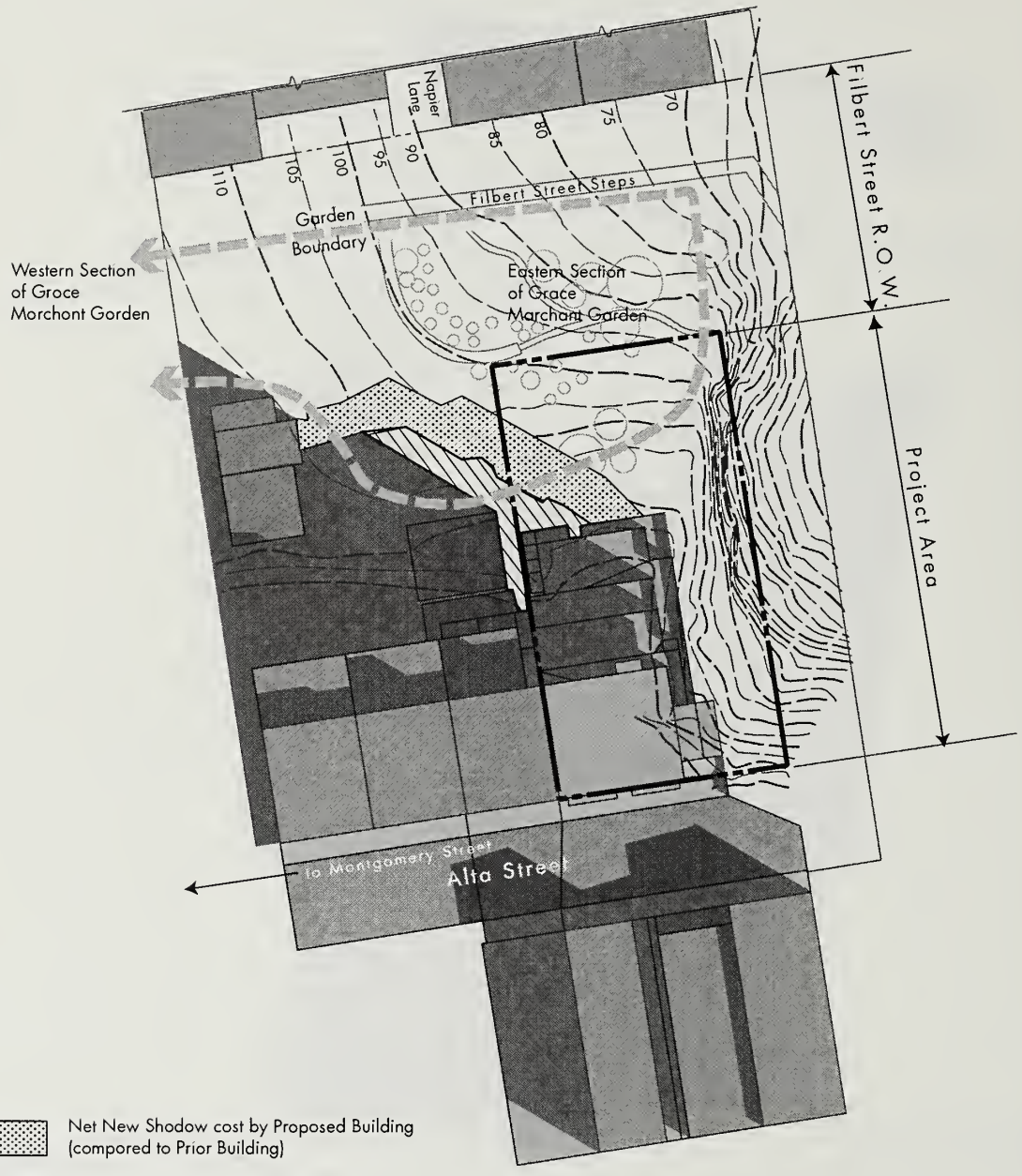
Figure 27
Proposed Design Shadows
June 21 - 3pm



22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 28
Proposed Design Shadows
September 21 - 9 am



A — Net New Shodow cost by Proposed Building (compored to Prior Building)

B — Shodow cost by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shodow compored to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

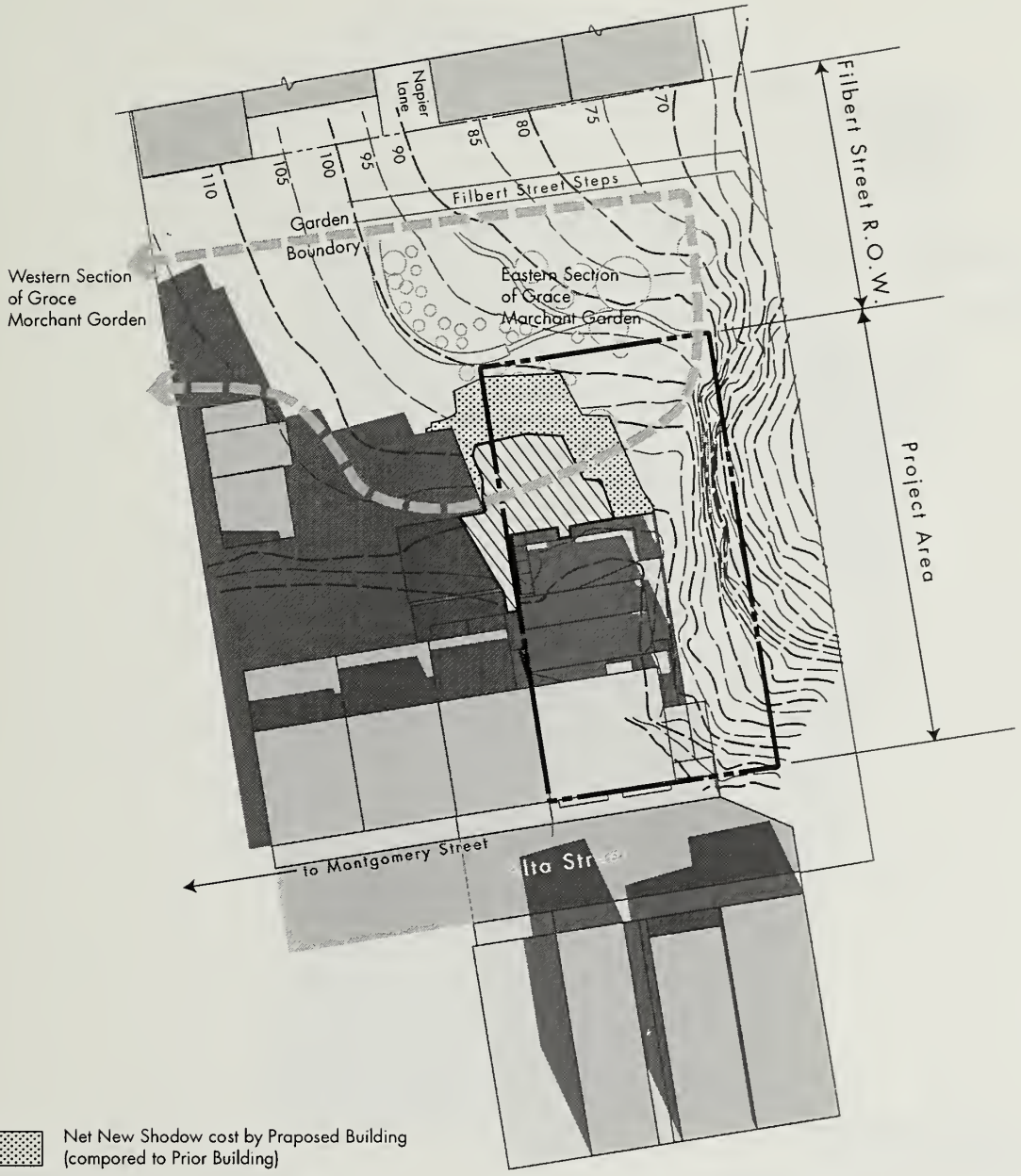
Existing Shodows (Shodow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shodow)

0 50 Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

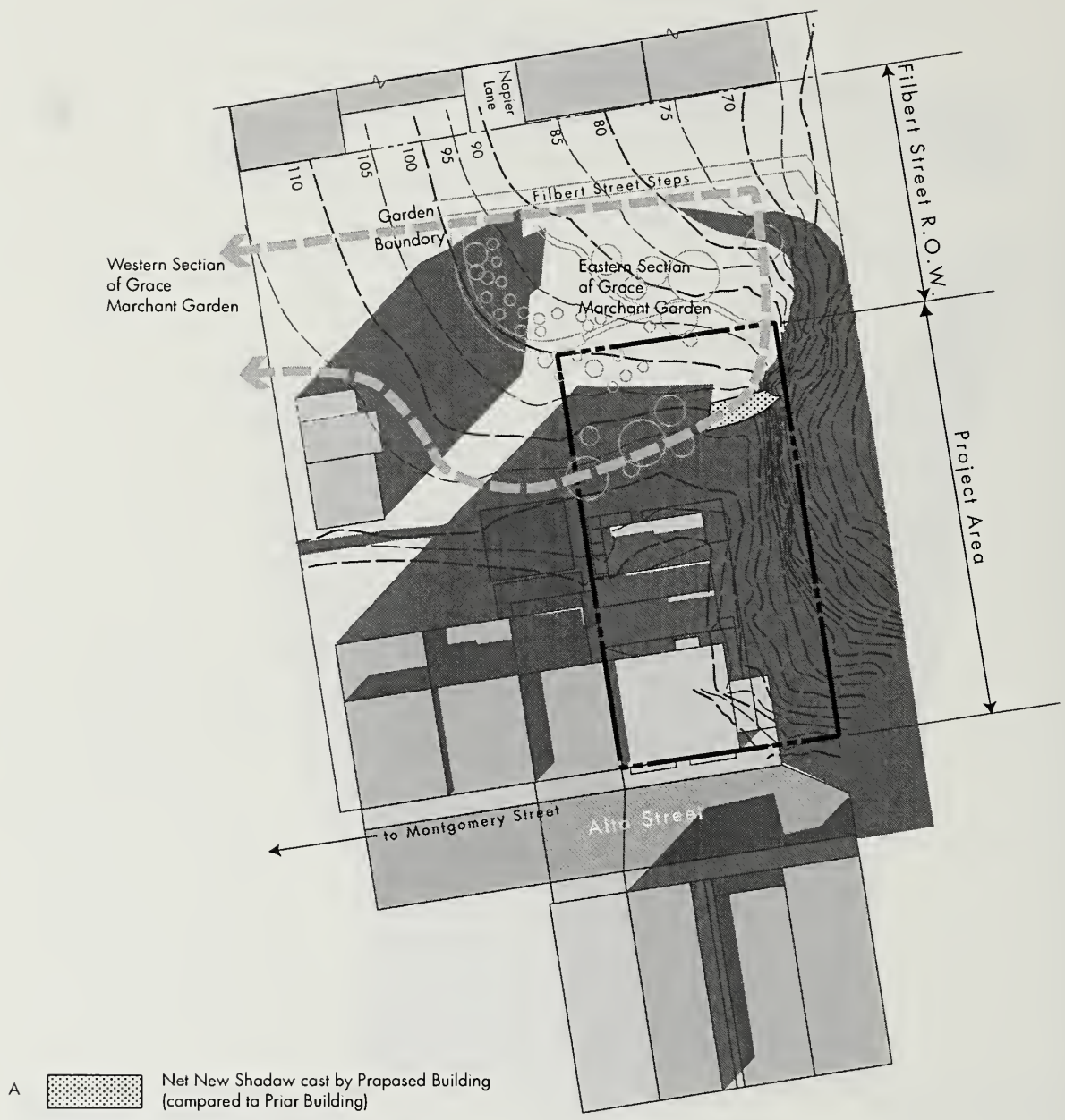
Figure 29
Proposed Design Shadows
September 21 - 10 am



22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 30
Proposed Design Shadows
September 21 - 12 noon



A — Net New Shadow cast by Proposed Building (compared to Prior Building)

B — Shadow cast by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shadow compared to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

Existing Shadows (Shadow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shadow)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

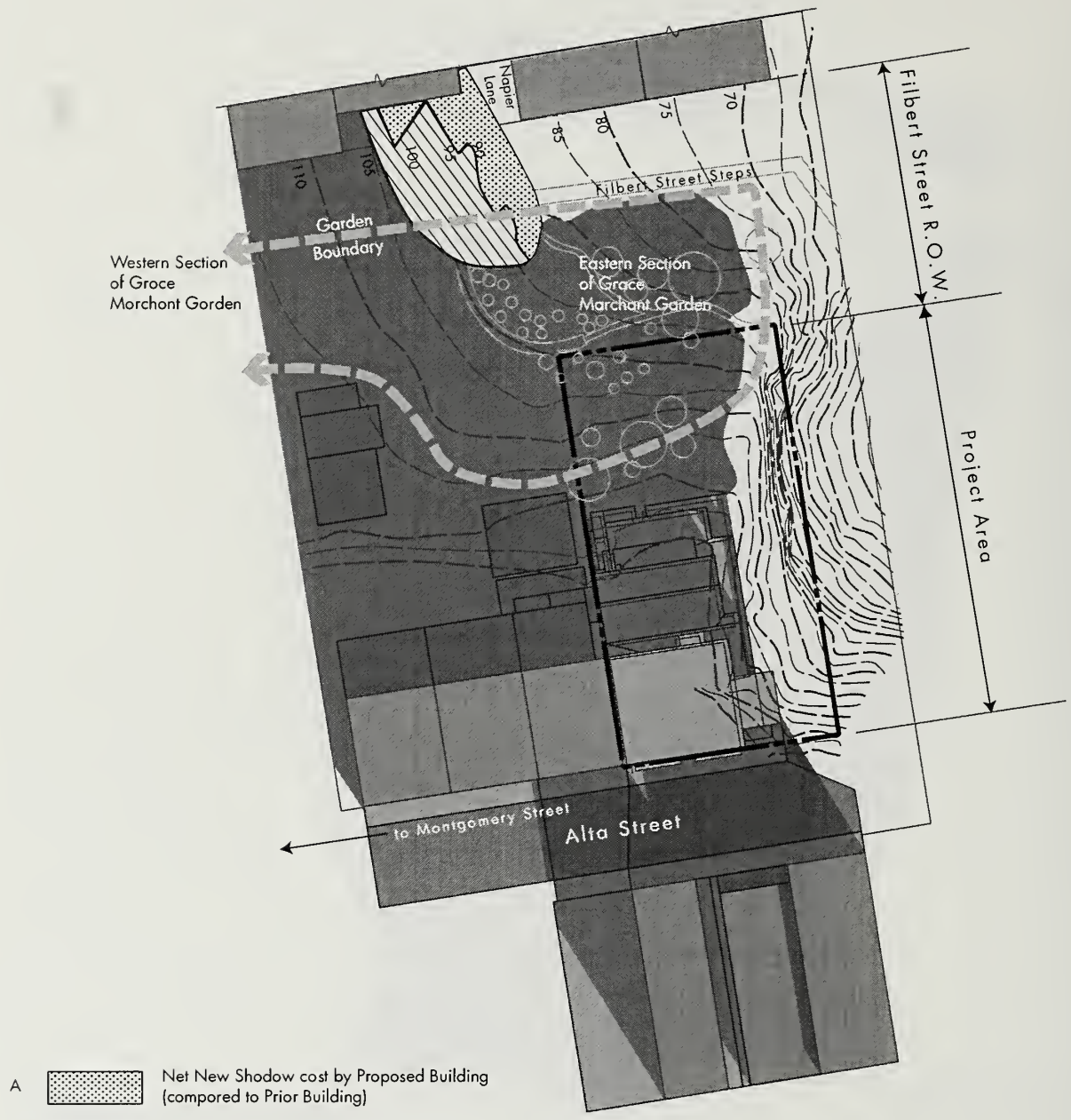
SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 31
Proposed Design Shadows
September 21 - 3pm

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 32
Proposed Design Shadows
December 21 - 9 am



A Net New Shodow cost by Proposed Building (compored to Prior Building)

B Shodow cost by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shodow compored to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

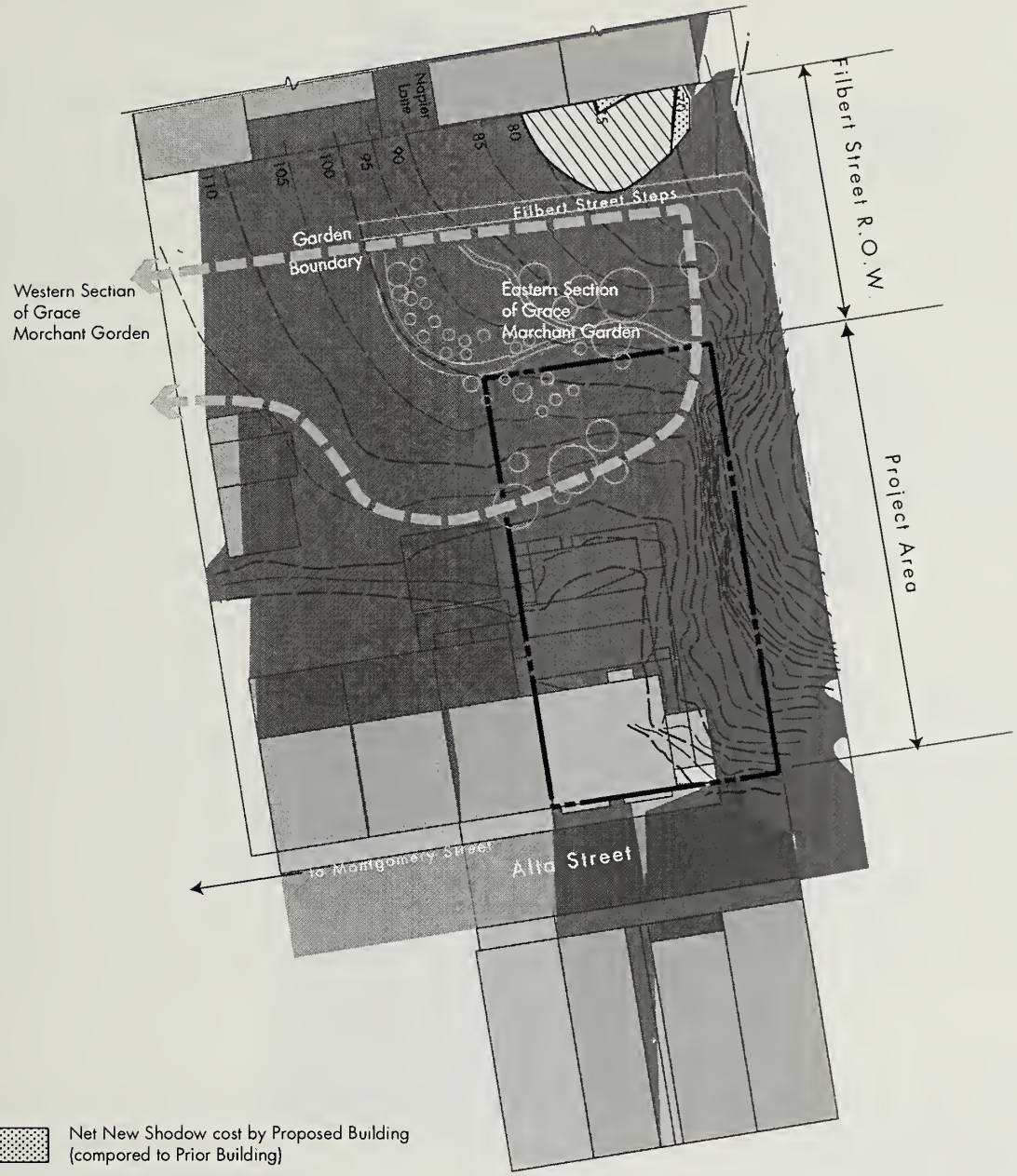
Existing Shodows (Shodow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shodow)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 33
Proposed Design Shadows
December 21 - 10 am



A — Net New Shodow cost by Proposed Building (compored to Prior Building)

B — Shadow cast by Priar Building (pre-1992)

Net new shodow compored to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

Existing Shodows (Shodow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shodow)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 34
Proposed Design Shadows
December 21 - 12 noon

A — Net New Shodow cost by Propased Building (compared to Prior Building)

B — Shodow cost by Prior Building (pre-1992)

Net new shodow compored to existing conditions (with no building on site) is the sum of A & B.

Existing Shadows (Shodow on Proposed Building includes New Project Shodow)

0 50
Feet

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 35
Proposed Design Shadows
December 21 - 3pm

the McNear building also extended beyond the property line. Existing shadow, with no building on the site, entirely covers the Filbert Steps at Noon and at 3:00 p.m.; the differences between the existing shadow, the prior building shadow, and the project shadow are small.

March and September

In March and September, shadow from the project would not, and shadow from the prior building did not, reach the Filbert Street right-of-way or the Filbert Steps at any of the times examined. As was the case with shadow cast by the McNear building, shadow from the proposed project would either remain on the project lot or merge with existing shadows cast by other existing buildings and by the hillside itself.

June

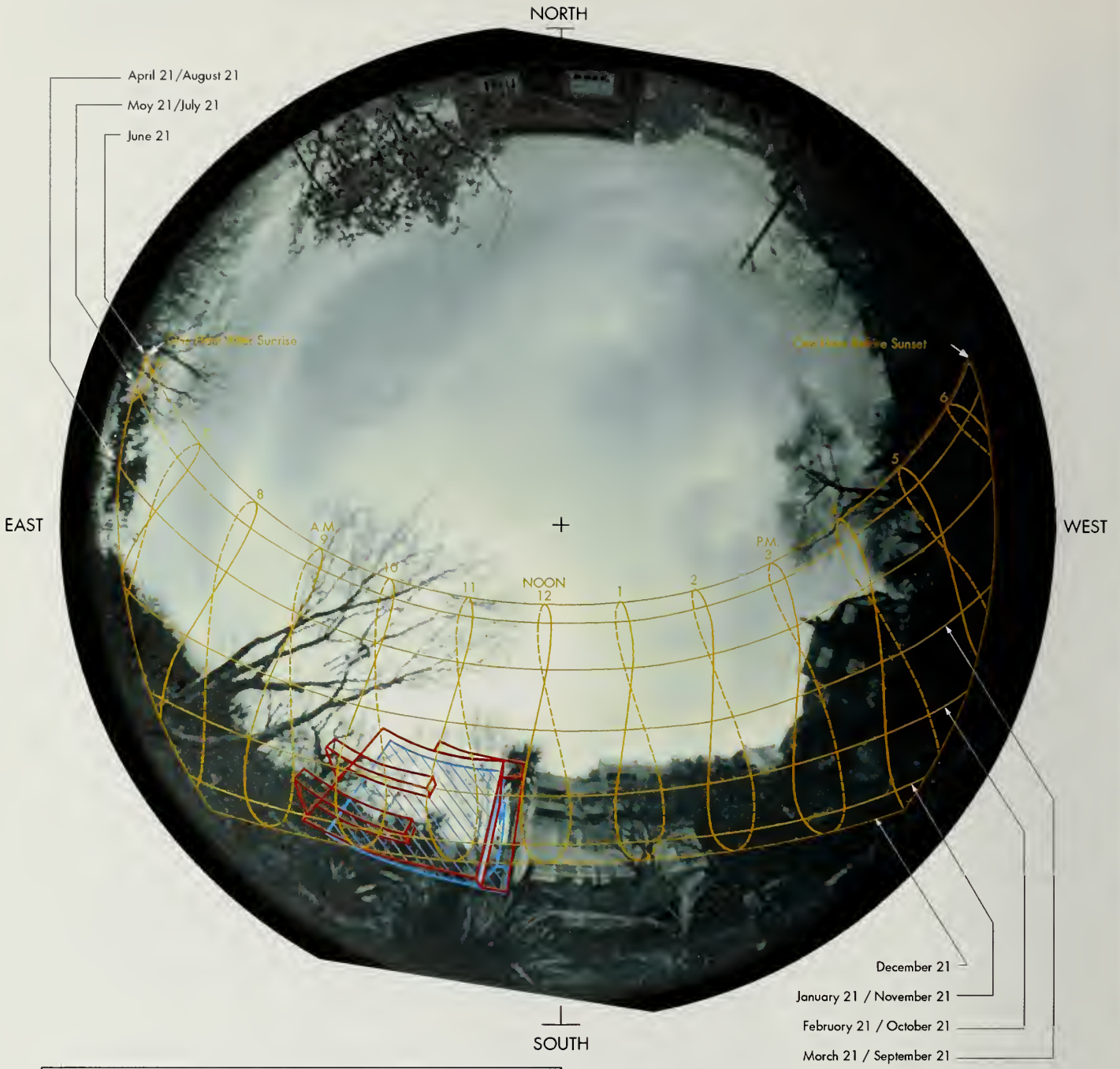
June shadows from the project would be relatively small in area and mostly contained within the area of the project lot, as was true with shadow from the McNear building. Shadow from the project would not reach the Filbert Street right-of-way or the Filbert Steps at any of the times examined, nor did shadow from the McNear building.

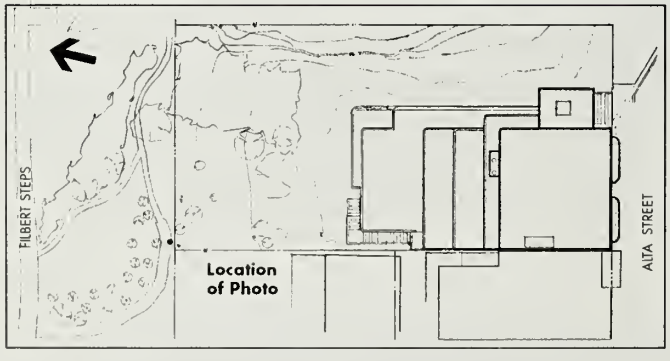
Sun Path or "Fisheye" Analysis

To further describe the potential for the project to add new shadow on the Garden, a sun path or "Fisheye" analysis was performed (see Figure 36). This analysis uses a camera lens with a 180° field of view to present the conditions that occur at the particular location from which the photograph is taken. The 180° lens allows the camera to photograph the full hemisphere of the sky[3] directly above that location. A matrix that identifies the path of the sun throughout the day over the course of the year is then superimposed on the photograph. In Figure 36, the existing condition (with no building present) is shown on a photograph taken from the northwest corner of the project site, at a height of about 40 inches above the surface of the ground. The location of interest is at the north property line of the project site because it offers the worst-case view from outside the property but within the Garden.

This type of diagram accurately depicts the time of day throughout the year that direct sunlight would reach a location, but creates an exaggerated visual image due to the distortion of the fish-eye lens. This technique differs from the shadow pattern analysis in that it does not predict the extent of shadow but rather the duration of sunlight and shade at one specific location. Horizontal lines indicate specific dates in the year (e.g. June 21 or May 21/July 21), while the vertical lines (actually distorted "figure-eights") indicate time of day. At the times of day and periods of the year, indicated by the horizontal and vertical

[3] Note that the image has the same perspective as a person would have when looking straight up into the sky from the photograph location. Compared to a map image, which looks downward, the fisheye image reverses the west and east directions. The sun's path, from east to west, would move across the image from the left hand side to the right hand side.





Times shown ore standord clock times for downtown Son Francisco. When Doylight Savings is in effect, fram early April through late October, clock time would be one hour loter thon indicated on the chort.

22-30 Alta Street Shadow Analysis / 970415 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 36
Sun Path Analysis

lines, that the project outline falls on the diagram, the project would cast shadows at the point where the photograph was taken.

Figure 36 illustrates, for the study location, the McNear building shadow described above under "Pre-1992 Conditions" and the proposed building shadow described above under "Evaluation of Impacts." The additional portions of the sun path matrix covered by the outlines of the prior building and of the project clearly indicate those times of day and months of the year when additional shadowing (beyond what is already shadowed by existing structures and topography) of this part of the Garden did or would occur due to each building. That is, the approximately 90 minutes of shadow cast by the McNear building, compared to conditions with no building on the site, and the additional approximately 30 minutes of shadow (for a total of two hours) that would be cast by the proposed project.

By its nature, shadow is cumulative, since each successive building may add to shadow created by prior buildings. However, shadow is also site-specific. Because there are no other reasonably foreseeable projects that could add shadow in proximity to the shadow that would be created by the proposed project, no cumulative impacts are anticipated.

E. GEOLOGY AND SEISMICITY

SETTING

A geotechnical and geological feasibility study conducted by Rogers/Pacific, Inc. in July 1996 focused on the geological conditions and provided preliminary recommendations regarding subsurface and foundation engineering aspects of the proposed three-unit residential structure. A second geotechnical/geological engineering analysis was performed in April 1998 by Cotton, Shires and Associates (CSA). The purpose of the investigation was to conduct a peer review and verify the previous findings of the Rogers/Pacific study. Material from these reports forms the basis of the site-specific discussion in this section. The CSA peer review of the Rogers/Pacific study found the original report to have been accurate and thorough, but also made recommendations for additional slope stabilization measures. All of the measures recommended in the two reports were accepted by the project sponsor.

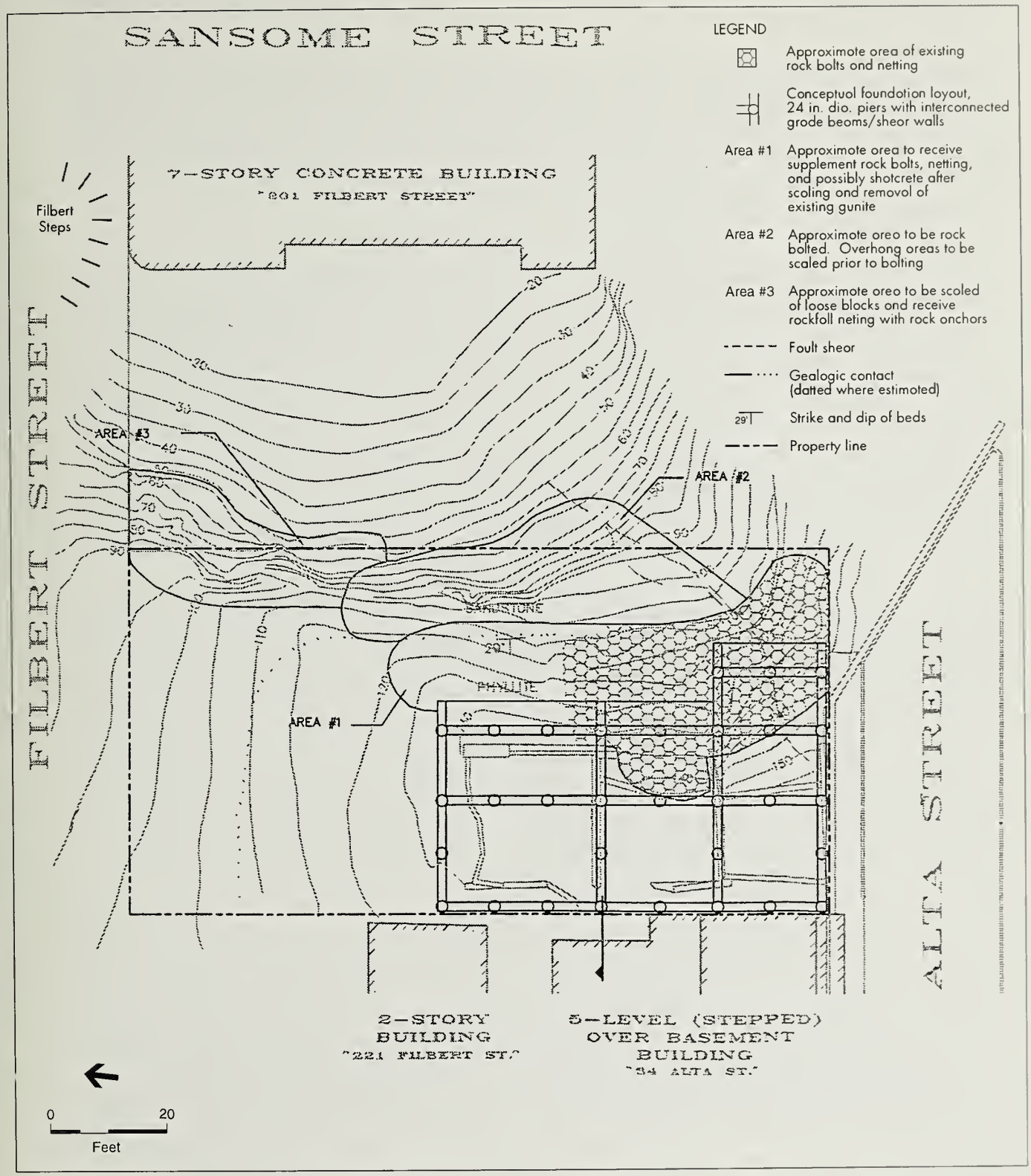
TOPOGRAPHY

The City of San Francisco is located at the northern terminus of the San Francisco Peninsula, bounded to the north and east by the San Francisco Bay and to the west by the Pacific Ocean. Distinguishing characteristics of the City's topography include rounded hills surrounded by broad valleys and sheer, bedrock cliffs. This terrain resulted primarily from the erosion of resistant bedrock uplands and the deposition of sand dunes.

The project site is located at the crest of the sheer eastern cliff face of Telegraph Hill, at elevations ranging from approximately 75 feet above mean sea level (msl) along the cliff face to 140 feet msl at the crest. The site dimensions are approximately 120 feet long by 62.5 feet wide, occupying approximately 0.2 acres. The property is currently undeveloped and contains remains of the concrete foundation from the previous Fred McNear Jr. Apartment Building that existed on the site from 1935 to 1992. Figure 37 depicts the topography of the site and the conceptual project foundation design.

The upper pad area is sloped and steps downward from south to north between the old foundation walls to the north at an inclination of approximately 2H:1V (2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical). The northern portion of the property slopes gradually towards the Filbert Street right-of-way. The area adjacent and east of the project site consists of steep slopes with inclinations of approximately 0.7H:1V (55 degrees). Localized portions of the east cliff face are steeper and can have inclinations of up to 90 degrees with some sections within the lower bedrock units overhanging (i.e. steeper than vertical). The moderate slopes are natural while the steeper slopes are result of extensive quarry operations that took place on the eastern slopes of Telegraph Hill in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The properties adjacent and to the north, west and south of the project site are situated at similar elevations with similar topography (Rogers/Pacific, 1996).

A series of rockfalls have occurred in the vicinity of the project site since quarry operations ceased on Telegraph Hill in 1915. In the winter of 1923-24, a significant rockfall occurred at the end of Alta Street,



22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Rogers/Pacific

Figure 37
Site Geology Map with Conceptual Foundation Configuration and Slope Treatments

dislodging sections of the former quarry face and depositing talus (rock fragments) onto the Filbert Steps. The City of San Francisco completed slope and street repair projects in this section of Telegraph Hill in the early 1930s. These projects included the realignment of Montgomery, Filbert and Alta Streets, and construction of a retaining structure down the north side of Alta Street. The construction of residential structures began in the 1930s following the completion of the street and rock slope improvements.

At the onset of commercial development at the eastern edge of Telegraph Hill in the late 1960s, various geotechnical investigations recommended slope stability structures to stabilize the old quarry faces, but the proposed plans were not implemented. In 1967, a rockfall occurred below the McNear building. This rockfall removed a portion of the foundation nearest the cliff face. Stabilization structures for the slope and building foundation installed at that time included vertical piers tied back to reinforced grade beams. The repair also included application of a protective concrete veneer to the slope (gunite). In 1982, minor rockfalls occurred on the lower portion of the slope, possibly due to the excavation activities for new construction at 201 Filbert Street, located at the base of the hill east of the project site. Another rockfall occurred at the same site in 1989. Recommended slope stability measures including rockbolting and concrete treatment of the slope were not implemented.

In 1992, following repaving by the City on Alta Street, a rockfall occurred on the slope at the foot of Alta Street dislodging and depositing talus onto the adjacent property to the east. The suspected cause of the slope failure was surface infiltration of rainwater during the period between the removal of the old concrete and application of the replacement concrete (Rice, 1998). This slope failure detached the gunite slope treatment that had been protecting the upper slope since its application in 1967. Without the gunite slope treatment or the asphalt covering on Alta Street, infiltrating surface water degraded the weathered and fractured shale bedrock that continued to ravel and dislodge from the upper portions of the slope. The degradation of the slope eventually undermined portions of the McNear building foundation. Continued undermining, exacerbated by heavy rainfall, resulted in the failure and destruction of the retaining wall originally placed along Alta Street.

As a result of this slope failure, the City demolished the McNear building and undertook additional slope protection measures. The slope treatment measures included a significant amount of scaling to remove loose rock, construction of a tie-back wall supported by deep piers at the end of Alta Street, rockbolting with prestressed bolts and mechanical anchors and covering portions of the slope with gabion rockfall netting. In addition, the concrete paving on Alta Street was replaced. At this time, there are no requirements or plans for further stabilization of the slope, absent construction of the proposed project.

GEOLOGY

The City of San Francisco is situated within the natural region of California referred to as the Coast Range geomorphic province. Much of the Coast Range province is composed of marine sedimentary rocks and basalt known as the Franciscan Assemblage. The Franciscan assemblage in this region

contains amounts of greenstone (altered volcanic rocks), basalt, chert (ancient silica-rich ocean deposits), and sandstone that originated as sea floor sediments. These rocks occur in northwest trending ridges and valleys and extend along the Pacific Coast from Oregon 400 miles south into southern California (Oakeshott, 1978).

Franciscan assemblage bedrock consisting of pre-Tertiary (greater than 65 million years ago) sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rocks underlie the City of San Francisco. These rocks were formed on ancient sea floors and eventually uplifted through movement at the margin of the continental plate. The Franciscan rocks include shale and massive and thick-bedded graywacke sandstone (dark colored sandstone composed of various sized angular grains in a fine-grained matrix). Graywacke sandstone and shale is the predominating bedrock in the northeastern portion of San Francisco and makes up Nob Hill, Russian Hill and Telegraph Hill. The hills are composed of massive sandstone and shale in vertical sequences with an approximate thickness of 3,650 feet. The orientations of the bedrock units suggest geologic structure characterized as a northwesterly trending syncline (concave-upward folded rock mass). The resistant, exposed limbs of the syncline form Telegraph Hill to the northeast and Nob Hill and Russian Hill to the southwest (Schlocker, 1974).

Published geologic maps and previous site mapping by Rogers/Pacific in 1996 and CSA in 1998 identified the bedrock underlying the project site as Franciscan Complex graywacke sandstone containing interbedded shale and conglomerate overlain by a weathered and highly fractured, altered Franciscan shale (sometimes referred to as phyllite). Previous mapping indicated that the sandstone and shale are oriented to the north-northwest and are tilted to the west, into the slope face.

Subsurface geologic mapping indicated that the upper 31 feet of the shale unit is weathered, deeply in some locations, with isolated layers of interbedded sandstone. The shale at these depths is thinly-bedded and friable with low hardness, intensely fractured and pervasively sheared and disrupted (CSA, 1998). The quality of the rock increases and bedding becomes more coherent with depth. At approximately 31 feet below the surface, a shear zone[1], up to ¼-inch thick, composed of plastic clay separates the weathered shale from the more competent graywacke sandstone rock below. Below this shear zone the shale is thin-bedded, slightly weathered, moderately hard, strong, and closely fractured (CSA, 1998).

Surface mapping of the slope face indicates that the exposed shale unit is generally weak, disrupted and intensely fractured. The shale on the slope face can slake (crumble and disintegrate due to effects of weathering) rapidly and is undergoing rock topple (rock creep) (CSA, 1998). The more competent sandstone exposed on the eastern face of the slope is slightly weathered, moderately fractured, hard and dips into the slope.

[1] A shear zone is a tabular zone of rock that has been crushed by many parallel fractures due to deformation resulting from stresses that cause rock bodies to slide past one another.

Previous site mapping identified several localized zones of sheared rock or ancient small faults cutting vertically through the sandstone and the shale. The small shear zones are oriented to the north and tilt towards the southwest into the sheer quarry face. These old shears appear to be associated with the ancient tectonic deformation of Telegraph Hill, namely the formation of the syncline. The shear zones have partly contributed to determining the shape of the cliff face. Approximately 20 feet of offset was identified at the shale/sandstone contact (Rogers/Pacific, 1996).

Slope failures (landslides) result in down-slope movement of rock and/or soil that occur on steep slopes when the forces restraining the slope are overcome by those forces that initiate movement. Rockfalls, or slope failures in rock slopes, can occur on steep rock slopes composed of fractured or jointed rock. Typically, failures occur along joints, fractures, bedding planes and shear zones causing rock blocks to become dislodged and eventually topple. Mechanisms that may initiate a failure on a rock slope include seismic groundshaking, pore pressure buildup, and the effect of gravity on overly steep slopes.

The exposed, weathered shale in the upper slope area is currently undergoing bedrock creep. A likely scenario for instability within the shale is raveling debris (Rogers/Pacific, 1996). The underlying massive sandstone is less jointed and fractured and historically has been subject to less rockfall. Analysis of the sandstone suggests that there are various "blocks" of rock that have a potential for instability (Rogers/Pacific, 1996). Because preexisting rock fractures can affect the overall strength of the rock mass, rock slope stability is usually evaluated by the structural discontinuities rather than the strength of the rock itself (Rogers/Pacific, 1996).

The project site vicinity (Telegraph Hill) is an area designated as susceptible to landslides (San Francisco Planning Department, 1997). At the present time, rockfall netting and rockbolts, installed in 1993, have confined various small rockfalls from the upper portion of the slope composed of shale. Rockfalls occurring in the massive sandstone slopes have consisted of small blocks raveling off the slope. These rockfalls have been retained by the slope catchment area behind the office building at 201 Filbert, east of the project site (Rogers/Pacific, 1996). The internal areas of the concrete foundation ruins are covered with gunite (impermeable surface veneer of concrete and grout) to seal the upper portion of the slope from surface water infiltration.

SEISMICITY

The San Francisco Bay Area is a region of high seismic activity and is in Zone 4 (most hazardous) on the Uniform Building Code (UBC) Seismic Zone Map of the United States. Both active and potentially active faults exist in the San Francisco Bay Area. An "active" fault is defined as a fault that has had surface displacement within Holocene time (approximately the last 10,000 years). A "potentially active" fault is defined as a fault that has shown evidence of surface displacement during the Quaternary (last 1.6 million years), unless direct geologic evidence demonstrates inactivity for all of the Holocene or longer (Hart, 1992).

The active faults considered to have the greatest potential to cause damage in the project area are the San Andreas fault, Seal Cove-San Gregorio fault, Hayward fault, and Rodgers Creek fault (ABAG, 1995). These faults range from 7 to 43 miles from the site, with the San Andreas (North Coast and Peninsula segment) being the closest. Other active faults in this region which are expected to cause less damage in San Francisco include the Calaveras, Concord, Maacama, Green Valley, West Napa and Greenville faults.

Although no known active faults are located within San Francisco, earthquakes on the San Andreas fault system and Hayward fault pose especially high risks to San Francisco and the project site because of their relatively close proximity and frequency of past movement. The National Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council, formed subsequent to the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, evaluated the possibilities of one or more earthquakes of magnitude 7.0 or more, occurring in the San Francisco Bay Area within the next 30 years. The result of the evaluation indicated a 67 percent likelihood that an earthquake event of Richter magnitude 7.0 or higher will occur in the Bay Area between 1990 and 2020 (San Francisco Planning Department, 1997).

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, signed into law December 1972, requires the delineation of zones along sufficiently active and well-defined faults. The purpose of the Alquist Priolo Act is to regulate development on or near active fault traces to reduce the hazard of fault rupture. No known active faults requiring delineation under the Alquist-Priolo Act have been identified within San Francisco.

Seismic Hazards

The greatest risk to life and property in San Francisco result directly from the ground shaking and ground failure associated with large earthquakes (San Francisco Planning Department, 1997). Groundshaking may affect areas hundreds of miles distant from the location at which the earthquake is centered (epicenter). Historic earthquakes have caused strong groundshaking and damage in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Underlying soils in areas located relatively distant from faults can intensify groundshaking. Portions of San Francisco that experienced the worst structural damage in prior earthquakes were not necessarily those closest to the fault but rather, in areas with soils that magnified the effects of ground shaking. The majority of hills within San Francisco, as is the case with Telegraph Hill, are composed of bedrock and tend not to amplify groundshaking (San Francisco Planning Department, 1997).

Seismic shaking caused by a San Francisco Bay Area earthquake could cause landsliding and rockfalls on many of the steep soil and rock slopes within San Francisco. Many of the rock slopes within San Francisco are composed of fractured and weathered bedrock that is susceptible to failure under certain groundshaking intensities. Structural discontinuities (fractures, joints shear zones) in the shale and

massive sandstone on the slopes at the project site increase the potential for rockfalls in the event of an earthquake.

REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, enacted by the California Legislature in 1990, was developed to protect the public from the effects of strong groundshaking, liquefaction, landslides, or other ground failure, and other hazards caused by earthquakes. The Act requires the State Geologist to delineate various seismic hazard zones and requires cities, counties, and other local permitting agencies to regulate certain development projects within these zones. Before a development permit is granted for a site within a seismic hazard zone, a geotechnical investigation of the site must be conducted and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into the project design. A Seismic Hazards Map (Zones of Liquefaction Potential) for the San Francisco North quadrangle, which includes the project site, was issued by the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) in 1997; CDMG has not yet issued Seismic Hazards Maps for areas subject to landsliding.

Uniform Building Code

California has adopted the Uniform Building Code (UBC) (Title 24, Part 2, CCR). In order to regulate seismic safety in its jurisdiction, San Francisco uses a modified version of UBC that includes provisions for excavation, grading, erosion control, foundation investigations, general design, structural integrity, and slope stability. The San Francisco Building Code contains amendments, additions, and repeals that are specific to building conditions and structural requirements in San Francisco. Specifically, Chapters 16 and A16 of the City Code deal with structural force design requirements, including regulations governing seismic-resistant construction. Chapters 18, 33, and A33 pertain to foundations, retaining walls, excavation and grading, as well as requirements for foundation investigations, seismic-resistant design, stable cut- and fill-slopes, and drainage and erosion control. Portions of these chapters relating to seismic safety are more stringent than the requirements provided in similar chapters of the Uniform Building Code. Since the project site is under the jurisdiction of the City, seismic safety provisions of the current (1997) San Francisco Building Code would apply. This most recent version of the Code would be used since it more adequately accounts for the proximity to faults and subsurface conditions.

Community Safety Element of the San Francisco General Plan

The Community Safety Element of the *San Francisco General Plan* contains maps that show areas in the City subject to geologic hazards (San Francisco Planning Department, 1997). The project site is located in an area subject to groundshaking from earthquakes along the San Andreas and Northern Hayward Faults and other faults in the San Francisco Bay Area (Maps 2 and 3). The project site is located in an area designated as susceptible to landsliding (Map 5). For any development proposal in an area of potential landsliding, the Department of Building Inspection (DBI), in its review of the building permit

application, requires the project sponsor to prepare a geotechnical report that assesses the nature and severity of the hazard(s) on the site and recommends project design and construction features that would reduce the hazard(s). To ensure compliance with all San Francisco Building Code provisions regarding structural safety, when DBI reviews the geotechnical report and building plans for a proposed project it determines necessary engineering and design features for the project to reduce potential damage to structures from groundshaking and landslide.

IMPACTS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The City has no formally adopted significance standards for potential impacts related to geology and seismicity. However, projects are normally found to have a significant effect on the environment if they would cause substantial soil erosion or unstable ground conditions; or if they would expose substantial numbers of people or structures to geologic or seismic hazards. The existing known seismic hazard factors specific to a site determine the potential for structural and safety hazards that can occur with the development of a project.

EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

Geologic Hazards

Considering past slope movements on the site, it can be assumed that future slope movement could take place in the more fractured, weathered shale rock overlying the sandstone, and rockfalls could continue to occur on the steeper portions of the project site. Talus (broken rock dislodged from the slope) from rockfalls could cause property damage as well as injury to people below the slope. If rockfalls were to occur, it would likely be on the cliff face along the eastern side of the project site. The south and west walls of 201 Filbert Street, the building located at the base of the cliff to the east of the project site, have no windows and were constructed with reinforcement to protect the structure against rock falls from the adjacent cliffs. The reinforcement of 201 Filbert Street extends several stories from the ground level and includes thicker walls with additional structural steel. The vacant area behind 201 Filbert Street serves as a catchment area for talus that becomes dislodged and falls from the adjacent cliffs (Rice, 1998). Further, this area is fenced with a locked gate that serves to limit access to the cliff base and thus reduces public access to the potential rockfall hazards. Rockfalls from the project site are less likely to occur on the gradual northern slope and therefore are not likely to affect people or property in the vicinity of the Filbert Steps or Grace Marchant Garden.

The project would involve construction of a residential building immediately adjacent to a steep bedrock slope at the eastern side of Telegraph Hill. One of the primary issues regarding the development of the property is the stability and treatment of the rock mass comprising the cliff. Recommended slope stabilization measures in the two geotechnical studies completed for the project (Rogers/Pacific, 1996; CSA, 1998) are proposed as part of the project. These measures include:

- Installation of additional prestressed rockbolts in the various locations on the bedrock slope to supplement those installed in 1993;
- Installation of gabion wire netting across the upper portions of the slope face;
- Gunite or shotcrete covering or structural wire mesh, tied back with rockbolts (or some equivalent measure) shall be used to reduce bedrock raveling thus reducing maintenance of the upper slope (application of gunite or shotcrete to the slope would also reduce surface water infiltration);
- Removal of loose or overhanging rocks and installation of rock netting to reduce future rockfalls and contain talus;
- Direction of surface drainage away from the foundation of the proposed structure to avoid water flowing or ponding adjacent to the foundation;
- Installation of drop inlet pipes, gutters, downspouts and interceptor drains to control surface water infiltration and direct surface water away from the foundation and slope;
- Addressing final foundation design criteria such as placement and design of concrete piers and rockbolt sequencing; and
- When the plans for the proposed project are finalized, a certified geotechnical engineer will review the plans and conduct an additional rock mechanics analysis of the sandstone slope incorporating findings from the initial study performed by Rogers/Pacific in 1996 and additional observations provided by CSA in 1998. This additional analysis should ensure that seismic and hydrostatic pressures have been adequately addressed.

Absent the above measures, rockfalls would be expected to occur from the steep slope east of the proposed project. However, implementation of the recommended slope stabilization and treatment measures that are included in the project would control and/or eliminate the mechanisms that could lead to future slope failures and rockfalls, rendering these events unlikely. Compliance with the geotechnical recommendations and applicable Uniform Building Code (as modified for San Francisco) provisions would reduce the likelihood of future slope failure and rockfall hazards to a less-than-significant level.

Seismic Hazards

Since the project site is located in proximity to known active faults in the San Francisco Bay Area, the proposed residential building would be subjected to seismically induced forces. Considering predicted earthquake intensity data and historic structural response on Telegraph Hill, the probability of a seismic event at the project site capable of causing total building collapse is low. Should a seismic event cause partial or total building collapse, debris would be dislodged and could fall to the base of the slope, potentially resulting in damage to the building below and adjacent to the site and, potentially, personal injury to people in the immediate area. As noted in the setting, access is restricted to the parcel at the base of the steep slope. This impact analysis assumes that final foundation and structural design, as well as construction would comply with the requirements of the Uniform Building Code (as modified for San Francisco). The Code provides design requirements to prevent major structural damage and maintain

life safety. Compliance with Code requirements for design, materials, and construction techniques would reduce the hazard of structural damage to the proposed residential structure to within an acceptable level of risk. Additionally, since structural design requirements of the Code are currently more stringent with regard to seismic loads than previously, the proposed building would be a substantially safer structure than the previous apartment structure constructed at the site in the 1930s and other older structures nearby. While the potential hazards of earthquake-induced structural failure cannot be eliminated for any new building in a seismically active area, compliance with applicable current codes and with recommendations of the project's geotechnical reports, including pier and grade beam construction, would reduce the impact of seismically induced structural damage to a less-than-significant level.

Incorporation into the project of the slope treatments such as rockbolting, rock netting and pressure-applied concrete coatings, as recommended in the project's site-specific geotechnical reports, would also reduce to a less-than-significant level the potential impact of seismically induced slope failure that could otherwise cause rockfall to damage the building below.

While collapse of the proposed residential structure would be unlikely, some structural damage could be sustained by the foundation, and non-structural damage could also occur, including falling of light fixtures or overhangs and overturning of unattached equipment. Such non-structural damage caused by ground shaking would be considered a major source of seismic hazards at the project site. Earthquake damage and injuries often occur when heavy objects fall from above, including ceiling tiles, light fixtures, wall hangings, and ventilation equipment. Heavy equipment and furniture that is not secured to structural elements of the building (floors, walls, or ceilings) is also hazardous during earthquakes because it may overturn or move, causing injury and additional damages, blocking of exits and disruption of fire control systems. This impact analysis assumes that all new interior construction will comply with California Code of Regulations, Title 24 standards for seismic resistance, and the seismic provisions of the San Francisco Building Code, whichever provides the most stringent requirements. Compliance with these building codes would reduce the impact of damage from unsecured objects in an earthquake to a less-than-significant level.

Construction Hazards

Preliminary recommended design of the building foundation involves the placement of approximately 32 interconnected straight-shaft reinforced 24-inch diameter concrete piers. These piers would extend through the underlying shale and into competent sandstone bedrock to depths of up to approximately 40 feet. A surface foundation, consisting of an interconnecting system of tie beam/shear walls, would connect to the piers.

From a construction operations standpoint, excavation and installation of the recommended vertical piers and foundation would be difficult considering the access from Alta Street and confined work area on the project site. Possible hazards associated with such construction could include worker injury or death by falls, unstable or falling construction equipment, and ground vibration causing rock or debris to dislodge

and roll down-slope. Equipment and rocks falling from the project site during construction could result in damage to properties below or injury or death of people in the vicinity of the construction operations. This impact analysis assumes that proposed construction activities would implement standard and appropriate safety practices to avoid construction related hazards. (It should be noted that many of the above impacts would occur if slope stabilization were to be undertaken even absent the proposed project.)

Compliance with a strict health and safety plan, developed and implemented for this particular project would reduce the occurrence of construction-related accidents and therefore this impact would be less-than-significant. See Section IV., Mitigations, for the recommended safety practices (agreed to by the project sponsor) to be included in the health and safety plan. See Initial Study for discussion of other construction-related impacts such as for noise, parking, and traffic.

CONCLUSION

The project sponsor has provided the above-referenced geotechnical investigation reports prepared by a California-licensed geotechnical engineer that are on file with the Department of City Planning and available for public review as part of the project file. The geotechnical reports found the site suitable for development providing that the recommendations included in the report were incorporated into the design and construction of the proposed development. The sponsor has agreed to follow the recommendation of the reports in constructing the project.

A critical element to the design of the structure is sufficient slope stabilization and protection from erosion. Slope treatments such as rockbolting, rock netting and surface concrete applications to control infiltration of surface water are included in the project design to control and contain future rockfall events. Compliance with applicable codes and recommendations made in project-specific geotechnical analyses would not eliminate risks (earthquake, rockfall, safety) associated with construction on this site, but would reduce them to an acceptable level.

The final building plans would be reviewed by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). In reviewing building plans, the DBI refers to a variety of information sources to determine existing hazards and assess requirements for mitigation. Sources reviewed include maps of Seismic Hazard Safety Zones (SHSZ) and known landslide areas in San Francisco as well as the building inspectors' working knowledge of areas of special geologic concern. Additionally, the Building Code contains provisions that require that grading on slopes of greater than 2:1, or where cut sections will exceed 10 vertical feet, must be done in accordance with the recommendations of a soil engineering report prepared by a California-licensed geotechnical engineer prior to construction. Such excavation also requires professional inspection and approval of the grading by a California-licensed civil engineer. The above referenced geotechnical investigations would be available for use by the DBI during its review of building permits for the site. Also, DBI could require that additional site-specific soils report(s) be prepared in conjunction with permit applications, as needed. Therefore, any potentially significant geologic, seismic,

landslide or construction-related hazards associated with structural collapse, slope failure or rockfall would be mitigated during the permit review process through these measures.

New development is generally safer – relatively speaking – than comparable older development due to improvements in foundation design, seismic analysis, building codes and construction techniques. For instance, compared to the perimeter surface foundation supporting the previous structure, the proposed building would be anchored into the array of vertical piers, which would provide greater stability than provided by the prior building's foundation. Therefore, while the proposed project would essentially rebuild on the same site as the McNear apartment building, the project would increase the geologic safety of the site and vicinity, compared to both existing and pre-1992 conditions, owing to the inclusion in the project of substantially more and better slope protection measures.

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F. BIOLOGY

SETTING

INTRODUCTION

A discussion of the potential effects of the project on the biology of the Grace Marchant Garden (Garden) has been included in this EIR for informational purposes only. The Initial Study for this project found that there was no potential for significant impacts on biological resources.

The Garden is located adjacent to, and partially extending into, the project site. It includes maintained landscaping within the Filbert Street right-of-way as well as portions of adjoining private parcels. The Garden has been actively tended for about 50 years and includes approximately 100 species of plants from many of the world's regions and climates (Morse, 1986). It has received acclaim as a prototype for urban beautification and receives extensive visitation, by both local residents and by tourists.

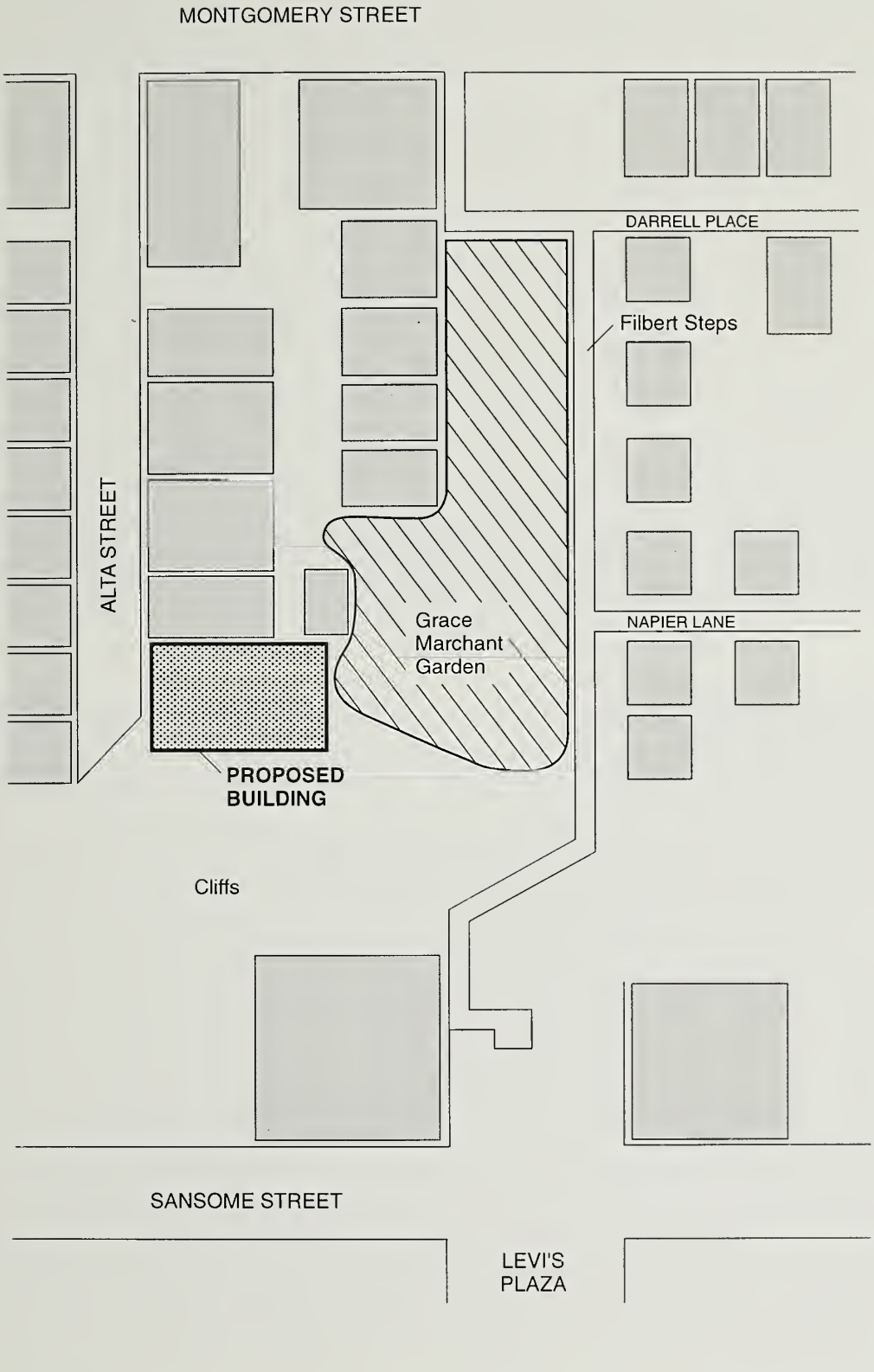
In the broadest terms, the boundaries of the Garden can be defined as Darrell Place to the west, just past Napier Lane to the east, the Filbert Steps to the north, and following an irregular line into the northern portions of properties lining Alta and Filbert Streets (see Figure 38). The Garden can roughly be visually and functionally described as having two primary sections, eastern and western. The most intensively maintained, colorful, and visual center of the Garden is its eastern section immediately south of the Filbert Steps east (and slightly west) of Napier Lane, and continuing onto the hillside on the northern corner of the project site and the northern portions of the two private parcels adjacent to the west.

The western portion of the Garden is the area to the west of the central section, to the east of Darrell Place, between the Filbert Steps and the buildings lining the Filbert Street right-of-way on the south. This portion of the Garden tends to be somewhat more divided into individual plots, have less variety and color in its landscaping, and function more as the yards of the individual buildings than as a coherent, unified garden.

REGION OF THE PROJECT

The project site is located on the eastern slope of Telegraph Hill, on the northeastern tip of the San Francisco peninsula. Telegraph Hill is composed of Franciscan assemblage rock consisting of graywacke, sandstone, and shales of marine origin. Portions of Telegraph Hill have been quarried in the past, resulting in very steep slopes on its eastern and northeastern faces, including immediately adjacent to the project site.

San Francisco has a mild Mediterranean climate characteristic of much of coastal California but with frequent summer ocean fogs. Most precipitation falls as rain in the winter months, while the summer is generally rainless. Although San Francisco historically supported a distinctive assemblage of



22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

Figure 38
Grace Marchant Garden
Context and Boundaries

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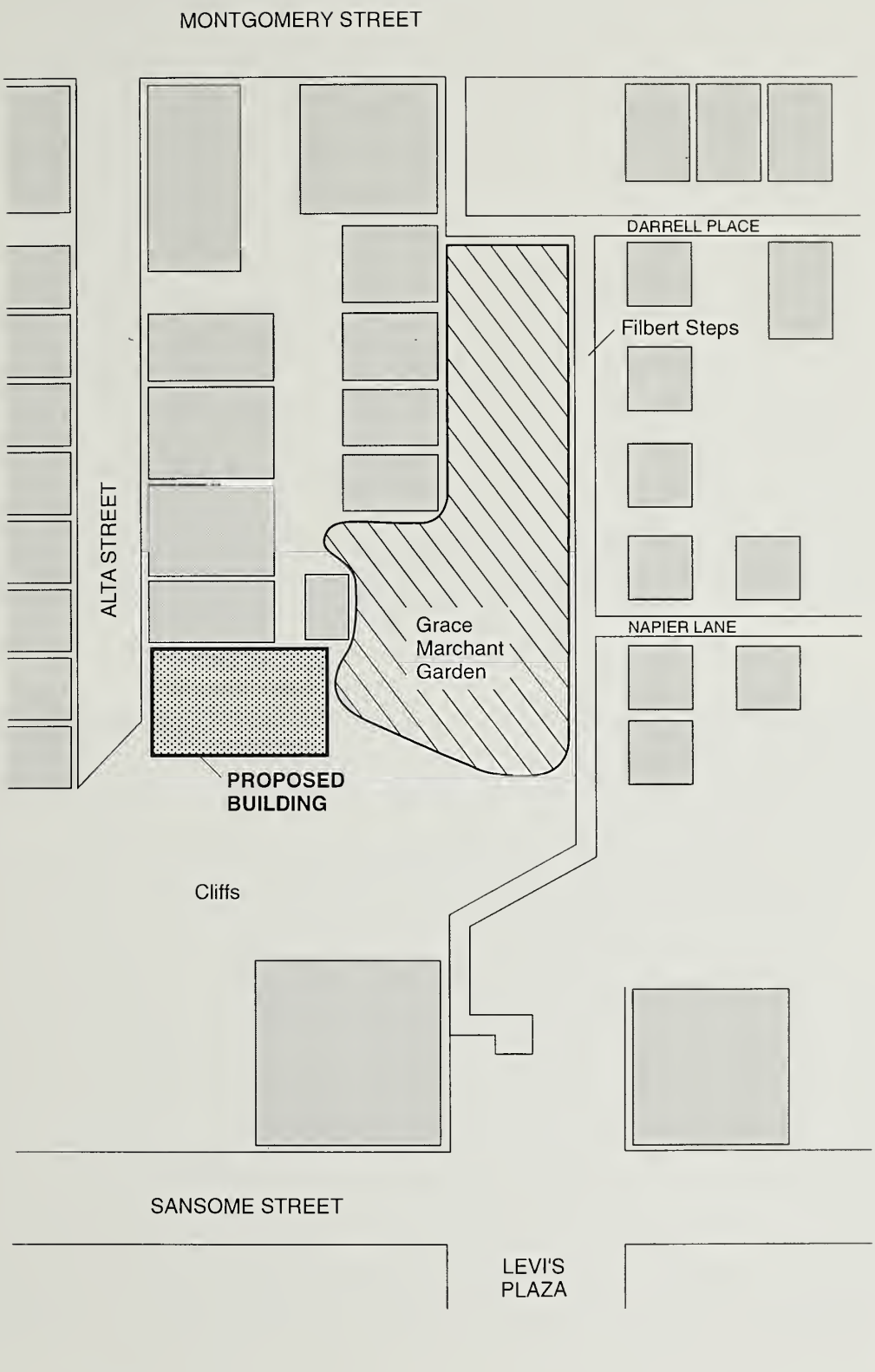


22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

Figure 38
Grace Marchant Garden
Context and Boundaries

geographically restricted plant and animal species, this portion of the City has been subject to urban development for nearly 150 years. As a result, very little native vegetation and habitat remains on Telegraph Hill.

PROJECT SITE AND ADJACENT AREAS

Uncultivated Portions of the Project Site

The project site borders Alta Street to the south and extends northward and downslope to the Filbert Street right-of-way. The project site was occupied by a residential structure between 1935 and 1992. Remnants of the previous building's concrete foundation remain on the site. Within the old building footprint, most areas are covered with concrete, but cracks in this material support a variety of weedy species, such as Jupiter's beard (*Centranthus ruber*), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), and thistle (*Cirsium* and *Carduus* spp.) (see Figure 39).

Beyond the foundation of the former building, the property slopes moderately steeply downward to the north and very steeply to the east. To the east of the foundation and elsewhere on the very steep slopes, uncultivated vegetation is present, including plant species that have been and are planted as ornamentals, but which also thrive without cultivation in the local climate. A large dense brush covers much of the northeastern corner of the site. In this uncultivated area, the most common species are weedy ornamentals that are often spread by birds: Algerian ivy (*Hedera canariensis*), blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), and pyracantha (*Pyracantha* sp.). Also present are a variety of less aggressive ornamentals that often persist without maintenance: acanthus (*Acanthus* sp.), rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), climbing roses (*Rosa* sp.), and matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*). During site visits, these species were observed either growing within a dense stand of ivy and blackberry, or in the case of the poppy, growing on the precipice on the east side of the property (see Figure 39).

Grace Marchant Garden

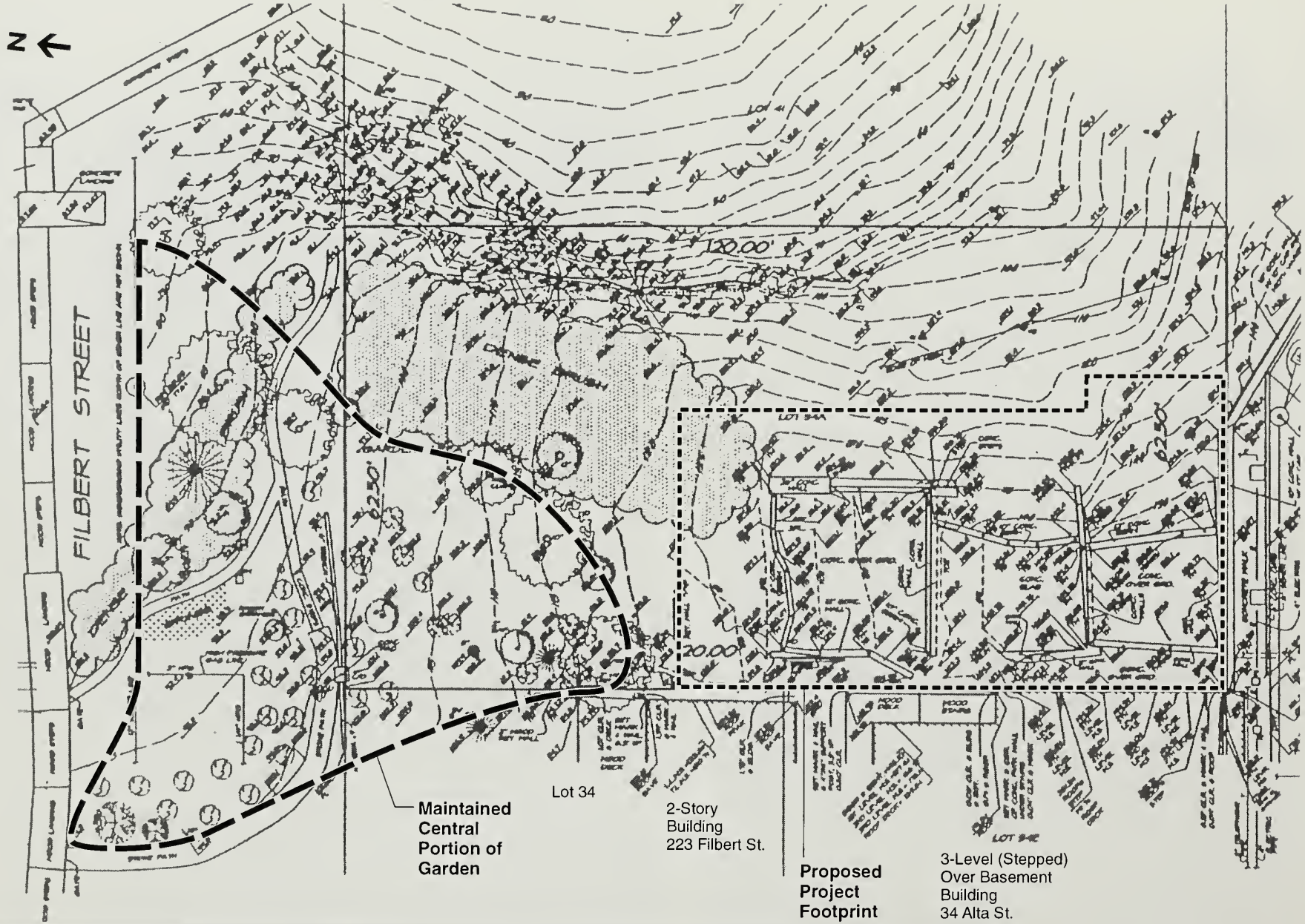
The northwest corner of the project site slopes more gently than elsewhere. This area has been planted and tended, as evidenced by a cleared understory, the presence of maintained ornamental[1] plants, some possessing tags, green plastic tying tape, and green metal plant stakes. This portion of the project site (about 1,000 sq.ft.) is part of the central portion of Grace Marchant Garden. Metal pipes driven into the ground at intervals suggest that retaining walls or walkways may have been present in the past. This maintained area begins near the northeast corner of the adjacent two-story dwelling at 221 Filbert Street, continues northward (and slightly west) to the Filbert Steps and runs eastward to about the site's property line (see Figure 40).

[1] The tern "ornamental" means a plant that is planted or grown intentionally for its beauty. In California, many ornamentals are not native (that is, species that grow naturally in the area), but grow naturally elsewhere in North America or on other continents.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 39
Photographs of Uncultivated Portion of Project Site



22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Martin M. Ron Associates, Environmental Science Asssociates

Figure 40
Project Site and Maintained Central Portion of Grace Marchant Garden

The Garden is composed almost exclusively of ornamental plant species (see Figures 41 and 42). Of the very few native species that were observed, they tended to be pioneering, or weedy, species. No habitat was observed for any special-status plant species, and no evidence of any rare, threatened or endangered plant species known to occur in San Francisco appears to exist in the Garden. All of the trees present on the project site are planted ornamental species, such as apple (*Malus* sp.), cherry and plum (*Prunus* spp.), and an ornamental, non-native species of oak (*Quercus* sp.). The trees were observed more or less at the boundary of the maintained area; no trees were found farther south, and few large trees were present in the gardened portion of the project site.

The gardened portion of the project site contains large-flowered members of the mallow family (Malvaceae), several specimens of rose (*Rosa* sp.), ferns, baby's tears (*Soleirolia soleirolii*), Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*), and a variety of flowering trees, shrubs and herbs. A very large climbing rose marks the boundary of the actively maintained portion of the garden within the project site. In addition to the ornamental species noted above, the Garden contains lilac (*Syringa* sp.), cypress (*Cupressus* sp.) trees, princess flower (*Tibouchina urvilleana*), a member of the banana family (*Musa* sp. or *Strelitzia* sp.), succulents, fuschia (*Fuschia* sp.), tree ferns, and angel's trumpet or golden datura (*Brugmansia* sp. or *Datura* sp.).

The western section of the Garden is composed of hydrangea (*Hydrangea* sp.), pittosporum (*Pittosporum* sp.), duchesnea (*Duchesnea* sp.), ranunculus (*Ranunculus* sp.), tree ferns, jasmine, azalea (*Rhododendron* sp.), lily-of-the-Nile (*Agapanthus* sp.), acanthus (*Acanthus* sp.), holly (*Ilex* sp.), heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*), and camellia (*Camellia* spp.) (See Figure 43). Some of the trees in the upper portion of the Filbert Street right-of-way are old and quite large, and cast a considerable amount of shade; these include elm (*Ulmus* sp.), magnolia (*Magnolia* cf. *grandiflora*), and cottonwood (*Populus* sp.). Roses thrive in the sunnier portions near Darrell Place.

The wildlife observed on the site consisted of common urban species, such as robins (*Turdus migratorius*) and hummingbirds (*Calypte* spp.). There was indirect evidence of other urban-dwelling species such as raccoons (*Procyon lotor*). Other urban-dwelling species would be expected, such as sparrows (*Spizella* spp.), blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) and rock doves (*Columba livia*). No habitat was observed to be present for any of the special-status wildlife known from the region of San Francisco.

IMPACTS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

A project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat for such species, substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants, and/or require the removal of substantial numbers of mature, scenic trees.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 41
Photographs of Maintained Section of
Grace Marchant Garden

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 42
Photographs of Maintained Section of
Grace Marchant Garden

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 43
Photographs of Western Section of
Grace Marchant Garden

EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

Building Location

Construction of the proposed project would replace the old concrete foundations and extend onto a portion of the weedy, un-maintained area of the project site. The loss of this habitat, currently occupied by weeds and un-maintained ornamental vegetation, would represent a minor and less-than-significant loss of habitat. No special-status plant or animal species or their habitat would be adversely affected. Because the footprint of the proposed building contains no large or scenic trees, no such resources would be affected.

Construction Impacts

During construction, some additional surface disturbance would occur beyond the building footprint, resulting in additional loss of vegetation. The proposed building footprint lies within about 5 feet of the landscaped area on the northwest side of the property, but is about 25 feet away from the landscaped area on the northeastern corner. Depending on the extent of surface disturbance beyond the building footprint, construction could result in the direct loss of a portion of landscaped vegetation that is part of the Garden. In addition, there could be some adverse impacts from debris sliding or rolling downslope into the Garden. This impact would be adverse because of its effect on the Garden, however, because it would be temporary, it would not substantially impact rare and endangered species or habitats, and would not require removal of substantial numbers of large or scenic trees, it would be considered less than significant. See Section IV., Mitigations, for improvement measures recommended to reduce potential construction-related impacts.

Impacts from Increased Shadow

A detailed shadow modeling was conducted for the proposed project and is presented in Section III.D, Shadows. The modeling shows for multiple times of the day throughout the year the current pattern of shadow, the extent of shadow when the former building was located on the project site, and the extent of shadow for the proposed building. In summary, shadows from the proposed building would be cast generally northward, adding to the shading of the proposed project site, which already receives shade because of its north- and east-facing slopes. The proposed building would create an additional 2 hours of shadow for approximately six weeks in both the spring and fall, when compared to existing vacant conditions. In the winter months, shadows from existing buildings and the hillside itself already cast most of the project site in shade in late afternoon and for much of the winter months. During the summer months, the shadow cast by the proposed building could cast shade directly north, but primarily within the property line.

Vegetation responds to both the intensity and duration of shade. According to *Hortus Third*, the encyclopedia of ornamental plants, shade in outdoor gardens ranges from open shade with unobstructed overhead sky found on the north side of buildings or tall trees to the partial or rather complete shade

found under trees. Deep shade provided by a dense overhead tree canopy can reduce light to one-tenth of full sunlight, where, by contrast, open shade admits diffused and reflected light to reach the ground. Partial shade may vary greatly depending upon the character of the tree and its canopy. Plants suited for growth in shaded gardens have shade tolerances ranging from very deep shade (very few species) to light shade (many species). Plants for shady sites vary widely in form and habit, and include herbs and woody plants, annuals and perennials, evergreens and deciduous plants, vines, bulbs, and ground covers.

The impact of the increased shading to the Garden would be to favor a palette of slightly more shade-tolerant species, especially in the area nearest the proposed building. Most of the planted species currently in the Garden are already somewhat tolerant of shade, since the exposure and existing buildings already cast shade into the Gardens. In addition, the plantings put in place prior to 1992 were established when the shade regime included the former building, which cast about three-fourths as much shade as the proposed structure. Therefore, most of the plantings currently in the Garden, especially the older ones, are expected to continue to thrive.

Some species, such as roses, benefit from direct sun for a portion of the day during the growing season. This may be partly due to a need for additional warmth, since some plants grow and flower more vigorously in warmer situations. Since the portion of the Garden with rose plantings (primarily in the northern portion of the project property and the adjacent area of the Filbert Street right-of-way) would receive less direct sun as a result of the project, there would likely be detectable adverse effects on these plantings. For example, the roses may become more leggy (taller and less compact), may flower less, or may flower slightly later. However, most of the plantings in the intensively gardened portion of the Garden are expected to continue to grow and flower, as they did when the previous building was in place and light conditions were similar to those projected with the new building in place. The intensively gardened portion of the Garden would continue to provide suitable habitat for a greater variety of open shade-loving plants than would the less intensively-gardened portion.

As the Garden became established in the 1940s and later, plantings were added gradually, until the Garden contained a diverse array of plant species. Plantings have continued to be added in response to natural events such as the unusual freezing weather that hit San Francisco in 1990 and 1991. Such a pattern of replacing garden plantings as they become older and less vigorous is typical. In addition, the types of plants that would potentially be adversely effected would be non-native, ornamental species that were selected based on subjective taste and appreciation for their beauty. If some of these species were to be affected, many alternative shade-tolerant species would similarly be available for their replacement. The proposed project would not therefore represent a substantial diminishing of a plant habitat according to CEQA standards. Further, such potential adverse effects would not preclude the ongoing use of the space as an attractive public garden, as it had been previous to 1992 and has continued to since.

REFERENCES

Morse, Rob, "Adopt A Garden," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 16, 1986.

G. GROWTH INDUCEMENT

As described in Chapter II, Project Description, the proposed project is intended to replace the prior, demolished building on the project site. This unique circumstance, combined with the lack of buildable sites in the vicinity, would substantially avoid any potential for the proposed project to contribute to further development in the area. With three residential units in a developed urban center, the project could be not expected to induce further growth in the neighborhood or the City.

CHAPTER IV

MITIGATION MEASURES IDENTIFIED IN THIS REPORT TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

In the course of project planning and design, measures have been identified that would reduce or eliminate potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Some of these measures have been, or would be, voluntarily adopted by the project sponsor or project architect and contractor and thus are proposed; some are under consideration and some have been considered and rejected by the project sponsor. Implementation of some may be the responsibility of other agencies. Measures under consideration or rejected may be required by the City Planning Commission as conditions of project approval, if the project were to be approved. Each mitigation measure and its status is discussed below.

There are two items required by law that would serve to mitigate impacts. These measures include no use of mirrored glass on the building to reduce glare, as per City Planning Commission Resolution 9212, and the limitation of construction-related noise levels, pursuant to the San Francisco Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the San Francisco Police Code, 1972).

Measures which are not required by legislation but which would also serve to mitigate environmental impacts appear below. Mitigation measures preceded by an asterisk (*) are from the Initial Study (see Appendix A.

AIR QUALITY

As described in the attached Initial Study (Appendix A), the proposed project has the potential to temporarily affect local air quality as a result of construction activities. As a result, the project sponsor has agreed to implement the following mitigation measure:

*• The project sponsor would require the contractor(s) to sprinkle exterior demolition sites with water during demolition, excavation and construction activity; sprinkle unpaved exterior construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other material; cover trucks hauling debris, soil, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during demolition and construction at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions unless the on-site engineer determines there is a conflicting reason to not do so. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor would require that the contractor(s) obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

Although not required to mitigate significant impacts, the following improvement measures would reduce less-than-significant impacts related to the geological and seismic and biology issues resulting from the construction of the proposed project.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMICITY

As noted in Section III.E, Geology and Seismicity, potentially significant geological/seismic hazards of the project would be mitigated by the building permit review process. To reduce less-than-significant impacts, the following improvement measures are recommended:

- The recommendations in the geotechnical reports conducted by Rogers/Pacific in 1996 and Cotton, Shires Associates in 1998 shall be implemented.

- In order to ensure that no construction-related accidents that would harm or damage workers, the public, or nearby buildings during the course of construction of the proposed project, the project sponsor has agreed to develop and implement a health and safety plan that includes the following elements as a mitigation measure:

    - Operation of heavy construction equipment only on the relatively flat portion at the upper portions of the project site;

    - Full-time safety harnesses for onsite workers as protection from falls;

    - Stabilization and anchoring of construction equipment to avoid machinery being dislodged and toppling off the slope face;

    - Netting installed below the construction activities to intercept and retain rocks and debris dislodged during construction activities;

    - Buffer areas maintained surrounding construction operations to restrict public access to potentially hazardous conditions;

    - Removal or securing heavy construction equipment during periods of inclement weather, at night and on weekends;

    - Monitoring of adjacent properties for damage caused by vibration and other potential hazards; and

    - Installation of fencing at the base of the cliff to the east of the project site as an additional mechanism to capture talus that may fall down the cliff.

BIOLOGY

- The intensively gardened portion of the Garden could be affected by construction activities. To minimize such impacts, the maximum allowable zone of impact should be bound with temporary

construction fencing and a silt fence to prevent debris from rolling downslope and damaging components of the Garden.

- For established, maintained plants damaged or killed during construction, replacement plants should be planted by the project sponsor.

CHAPTER V

SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED

In accordance with Section 21100(b)(2)(A) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA),and with Section 15126(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this chapter is to identify impacts that could not be eliminated or reduced to an insignificant level by mitigation measures included as part of the project, or by other mitigation measures that could be implemented, as described in Chapter V, Mitigation Measures.

As analyzed in the Setting and Impacts section (Chapter 3), this EIR does not identify any significant impacts related to the proposed project. This chapter is subject to final determination by the City Planning Commission as part of its certification process for the EIR. The Final EIR will be revised, if necessary, to reflect the findings of the Commission.

CHAPTER VI
ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

This chapter identifies alternatives to the proposed project, discusses environmental impacts associated with each alternative, and, where an alternative has been considered by the project sponsor in development of the project, gives the reasons the alternative was rejected in favor of the project. Project decision-makers could adopt any of the following alternatives, if feasible, instead of approving the proposed project.

A. ALTERNATIVE A: NO PROJECT

Under No Project conditions, the site would remain in its existing, vacant condition. No new development would take place on the site. None of the potential impacts related to the proposed project would occur. This alternative would not preclude the future development of this site by the same or a different project sponsor with a different development proposal at some unknown point in the future.

If the project remained in its existing vacant condition, the slope protection systems currently in place, such as the gunite slope treatment, rockbolts and rocknetting, would not be improved or removed. As a result, it is likely that surface water would continue to infiltrate into the upper shale unit and result in continued slope degradation. If the upper slope materials were to erode, they could become dislodged and fall off the steeper portions of the cliff. Over time, degradation and raveling could eventually cause the existing concrete foundation remains to also become unstable. Additionally, erosion of the slope could eventually cause the existing rockbolts to become undermined and break away from the slope. This alternative would not include any of the beneficial slope stabilization measures proposed as part of the project.

Under this alternative, seismic shaking during an earthquake could initiate rockfalls from the upper portions of the slope. Without appropriate rockfall netting at the base of the slope, talus would continue to accumulate below the slope adjacent to 201 Filbert Street and possibly impact the Grace Marchant Garden. Eventually, the existing rock netting, if not maintained, could become undermined and be dislodged from the slope. This alternative has been rejected because it would not meet any of the project sponsor's objectives.

B. ALTERNATIVE B: REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVE

This alternative would involve the construction of a new structure on the site that would generally be a replica of the former Fred McNear, Jr. Apartment Building that occupied the site from 1935 to 1992, except that this alternative, like the project, would include three residential units, rather than five units as existed in the prior building. Construction of this replacement structure would not create any new

shadow effects or impacts to the Telegraph Hill Historic District when compared to the site's pre-1992 conditions. Construction of a structure under this alternative's conditions would create new shadow impacts on surrounding properties and the Grace Marchant Garden when compared to existing conditions, as noted on the shadow diagrams presented in this EIR (Figures 20-35).

Like the former McNear building, the structure to be built under this alternative would not include parking, and therefore this alternative would require a parking variance. The lack of on-site parking would incrementally affect the already congested parking and traffic conditions in the vicinity, but not to a degree that would be considered significant, because three residential units would generate limited traffic and parking demand.

Under this alternative, geological impacts on the project site would be similar to those identified for the proposed project. Although the proposed project would result in the construction of a larger structure than under the Replacement Alternative, the potential for rockfalls during construction and the reduction in subsequent seismic hazards on the site would be similar for both structures. Construction under this alternative would comply with more stringent Building Code requirements and thus the building would be a relatively safer structure than the previous apartment structure. With current Building Code requirements (as modified for San Francisco) coupled with advancements in rock slope protection and pier-foundation design and construction, the building constructed under this alternative would be less prone to hazards related to seismic shaking, slope erosion and rockfalls, compared to the McNear building.

Although there are no significant impacts associated with the proposed project, this alternative would be considered the environmentally superior alternative because it would not introduce any new shadow impacts to the site, surrounding neighborhood, or Telegraph Hill Historic District when compared to the Fred McNear, Jr. Apartment Building that occupied the site from 1935 to 1992. Further, if an exact replica of the previous structure on the site were to be built, it would appear to be approveable under the provisions of Article 10, for its visual contribution to the District would be identical to what had been located on the site from 1935 to 1992, a structure that was designated as "Contributory" to the District. The District has continued to exist as a cultural resource in spite of the loss of the prior building at 22-30 Alta Street, so it is unlikely that the District would lose its eligibility as an historic resource based upon the design of the replacement structure. The District would remain potentially eligible, at least in part, to be included in the California Register of Historic Resources, as well as the National Register of Historic Places.

The project sponsor has rejected this alternative as infeasible in that it would not meet two of the primary objectives, to provide economically viable home-ownership opportunities and to provide on-site parking. The sponsor does not believe that the selling price for residential condominiums that would average about 1,100 square feet and would not provide parking could generate enough revenue to fund adequate slope stabilization measures for the site. Therefore, according to the project sponsor, approval of this alternative would result in no construction by this sponsor on the project site.

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Executive Director
North Beach Chamber of Commerce
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Denise McCarthy
Executive Director
Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center
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Joe Luttrell
President
Telegraph Hill Dwellers
Box 330159
San Francisco, CA 94133

J. A. Lew
Vice President
Bret Harte Terrace-Francisco St
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San Francisco, CA 94133

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Telegraph Hill Survival Assn.
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Telegraph Hill Dwellers
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Attn: Amy B. Blumberg

Mark R. Miller
267 Filbert Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

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Attn: Lee F. Gotshall-Maxon

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Friends of the Garden
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The Alta/Filbert Preservation Assn.
1308 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

Nancy Shanahan
The Telegraph Hill Dwellers
P.O. Box 330159
San Francisco, CA 94133

Willis J. Taylor
19 Alta Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

Aaron Peskin
Telegraph Hill Dwellers
Planning & Zoning Committee
C/O 522 Filbert Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

Jordan D. Luttrell
28 Napier Lane
San Francisco, CA 94133

Robert C. Bent
29 Alta Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

Susan Calender
261 Filbert Steps
San Francisco, CA 94133

James Attwood, Secretary
The Alta/Filbert Preservation Assn.
C/O 1308 Montgomery St.
San Francisco, CA 94133

James & Firouzeh Attwood
221 Filbert Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

Gary Kray
10 Napier Lane
San Francisco, CA 94133

Leo J. McLaughlin III
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30 Blackstone Court
San Francisco, CA 94123

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Dyett Bhatia
70 Zoe Street
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Peter Bosselman
Environmental Simulation Laboratory
119 Wurster Hall
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Georgia Brittan
870 Market Street, Room 1119
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David Cincotta
1388 Sutter Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, Ca 94102

Coalition For San Francisco Neighborhoods
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175 Yukon Street
San Francisco, CA 94114

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San Francisco, CA 94105

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San Francisco, CA 94111

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Attn: Robert Fan

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Attn: Sandra Lambert

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Attn: Steven L. Vettel

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San Francisco, CA 94103
Attn: Peter Gordon

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West Tower, 23rd Floor
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Attn: Paula Crow

Gruen, Gruen & Associates
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San Francisco, CA 94105

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San Francisco, CA 94111

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San Francisco, CA 94118

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San Francisco, CA 94111
Attn: Sheryl Bratton

Kaplan/McLaughlin/Diaz
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San Francisco, CA 94111
Attn: Jan Vargo

Legal Assistance to the Elderly
Brent Kato
1453 Mission Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

Larry Mansbach
44 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94104

Sally Maxwell
Maxwell & Associates
1522 Grand View Drive
Berkeley, CA 94705

Cliff Miller
970 Chestnut Street, #3
San Francisco, CA 94109

Milton Meyer & Co.
One California Street
San Francisco, CA 94111
Attn: James C. DeVoy

Robert Meyers Associates
120 Montgomery Street, Suite 2290
San Francisco, CA 94104

Morrison & Foerster
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San Francisco, CA 94104
Attn: Jacob Herber

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San Francisco, CA 94110
Attn: Regina Sneed

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San Francisco, CA 94104

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San Francisco, CA 94133
Attn: Gloria Root

Dennis Purcell
Coblentz, Patch, Duffy and Bass
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San Francisco, Ca 94108

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3756 Grant Avenue, Suite 301
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Reuben & Alter
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San Francisco, CA 94111

UCSF Capital Planning Department
145 Irving Street
San Francisco, CA 94122
Attn: Bob Rhine

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Rothschild & Associates
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San Francisco Beautiful
41 Sutter Street, #709
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Attn: Donna Casey, Exec. Director

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San Francisco, CA 94104

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Attn: Stanley Smith

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243 Bartlett Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
Attn: David Jones

John Sanger, Esq.
1 Embarcadero Center, 12th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111

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100 Pine Street, Suite 2300
San Francisco, CA 94111
Attn: Mathew Cappiello

Jerry Tone
Montgomery Capital Corp.
244 California St.
San Francisco, CA 94111

Jon Twitchell Associates
4419 Moraga Ave.
Oakland, CA 94611

Stephen Weicker
899 Pine Street, #1610
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Calvin Welch
Council of Community Housing Organizations
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San Francisco, CA 94117

Howard Wexler
235 Montgomery, 27th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104

Eunice Willette
1323 Gilman Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94124

Bethea Wilson & Associates
Art In Architecture
2028 Scott, Suite 204
San Francisco, CA 94115

MEDIA

Associated Press
1390 Market Street, Suite 318
San Francisco, CA 94102
Attn: Bill Shiffman

Leland S. Meyerzone
KPOO - FM
P.O. Box 6149
San Francisco, CA 94101

San Francisco Bay Guardian
2700 - Nineteenth Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
Attn: Patrick Douglas, City Editor

San Francisco Business Times
275 Battery Street, Suite 940
San Francisco, CA 94111
Attn: Tim Turner

San Francisco Chronicle
925 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
Attn: City Desk

San Francisco Examiner
P.O. Box 7260
San Francisco, CA 94120
Attn: Tyche Hendricks

San Francisco Independent
1201 Evans Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94124
Attn.: City Desk

The Sun Reporter
1366 Turk Street
San Francisco, CA 94115

Tenderloin Times
146 Leavenworth Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
Attn: Rob Waters

CHAPTER VIII

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Initial Study

APPENDIX B: Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Final Case Report (August, 1985)

APPENDIX C: San Francisco Planning Code Article 10, Appendix G

APPENDIX A: INITIAL STUDY

NOTICE THAT AN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
IS DETERMINED TO BE REQUIRED

Date of this Notice: May 9, 1998, Amended October 7, 1998.

Lead Agency: City and County of San Francisco, Planning Department
1660 Mission Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103

Agency Contact Person: Jim McCormick **Telephone:** (415) 558-6394

Project Title: 97.433E: 22-30 Alta Street **Project Sponsor:** Alta Street Development, LLC
Contact Person: Peter Pfau

Project Address: 22-30 Alta Street
Assessor's Block and Lot: Block 106, Lot 34A
City and County: San Francisco

Project Description: Construction of a three-unit, six-level residential condominium building with parking for five automobiles. The proposed structure would have three levels above the existing grade at Alta Street and three levels stepping down Telegraph Hill towards the north. The parking garage would be located at street level on Alta Street. The project site is adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way, which includes the Grace Marchant Garden and Filbert Steps, and is located within the Telegraph Hill Historic District.

THIS PROJECT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT IS REQUIRED. This determination is based upon the criteria of the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, Sections 15063 (Initial Study), 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance), and the following reasons, as documented in the Initial Study for the project, which is attached.

Deadline for Filing an Appeal of this Determination to the City Planning Commission: June 8, 1998.
An appeal requires: 1) a letter specifying the grounds for appeal, and;
2) a $209.00 filing fee.

for HILLARY E. GITELMAN, Environmental Review Officer

22-30 ALTA STREET
INITIAL STUDY
97.433E

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is 22-30 Alta Street in the Telegraph Hill neighborhood of San Francisco, on the north side of Alta Street, at the end of a dead-end street. Alta Street is between Union and Filbert and Montgomery and Sansome Streets (see Figure 1). The project site is adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way, which includes the Grace Marchant Garden and Filbert Steps, and is located within the Telegraph Hill Historic District. The 7,500 (120' x 62.5') square-foot site consists of Lot 34A of Assessor's Block 106, and is currently vacant except for the remains of a previous apartment building foundation that was razed by the City in 1992. The rectangular site slopes very steeply down the face of Telegraph Hill to the north and east, dropping more than 60 feet vertically over its 120-foot horizontal length.

The project would construct a six level, three-unit residential condominium structure. The building would include approximately 5,575 square feet (sq. ft.) of occupiable floor area, or approximately 1,860 sq.ft. per unit. Parking and circulation space, including the lobby, would total about 2,240 sq. ft., for a total of about 7,815 sq. ft. Each unit would be on two levels and would have a distinct floor plan from the other units. Each unit would have two bedrooms and two would have two bathrooms, while one would have three bathrooms.

The proposed building would cover about 36 percent of the lot.[1] Setbacks of the building would range from 17 to 22 feet along the east lot line (location of the stairwell) and be more than 51 feet from the rear (north) property line. There would be no setbacks from the front (south) or west lot lines.

The building height, measured according to the Planning Code[2], would be approximately 32 feet above street grade on Alta Street. At the rear, the maximum dimension along the north elevation would be approximately 73 feet, achieved in four separate wall planes, each set back from the one below. On the east elevation, the building would rise about 82 feet above the top of the steep slope. A parking garage would be located at street level (overall level four) with space for five automobiles. Entrance to the structure would be from Alta Street for pedestrians and vehicles. No demolition of existing structures would be involved. A rear exit would be located on the north side of the building (see Figure 2). An existing low concrete wall that runs along the eastern edge of Alta Street, and that was extended in front of the entire length of the project site subsequent to the previous building located on the site being torn down, would be removed.

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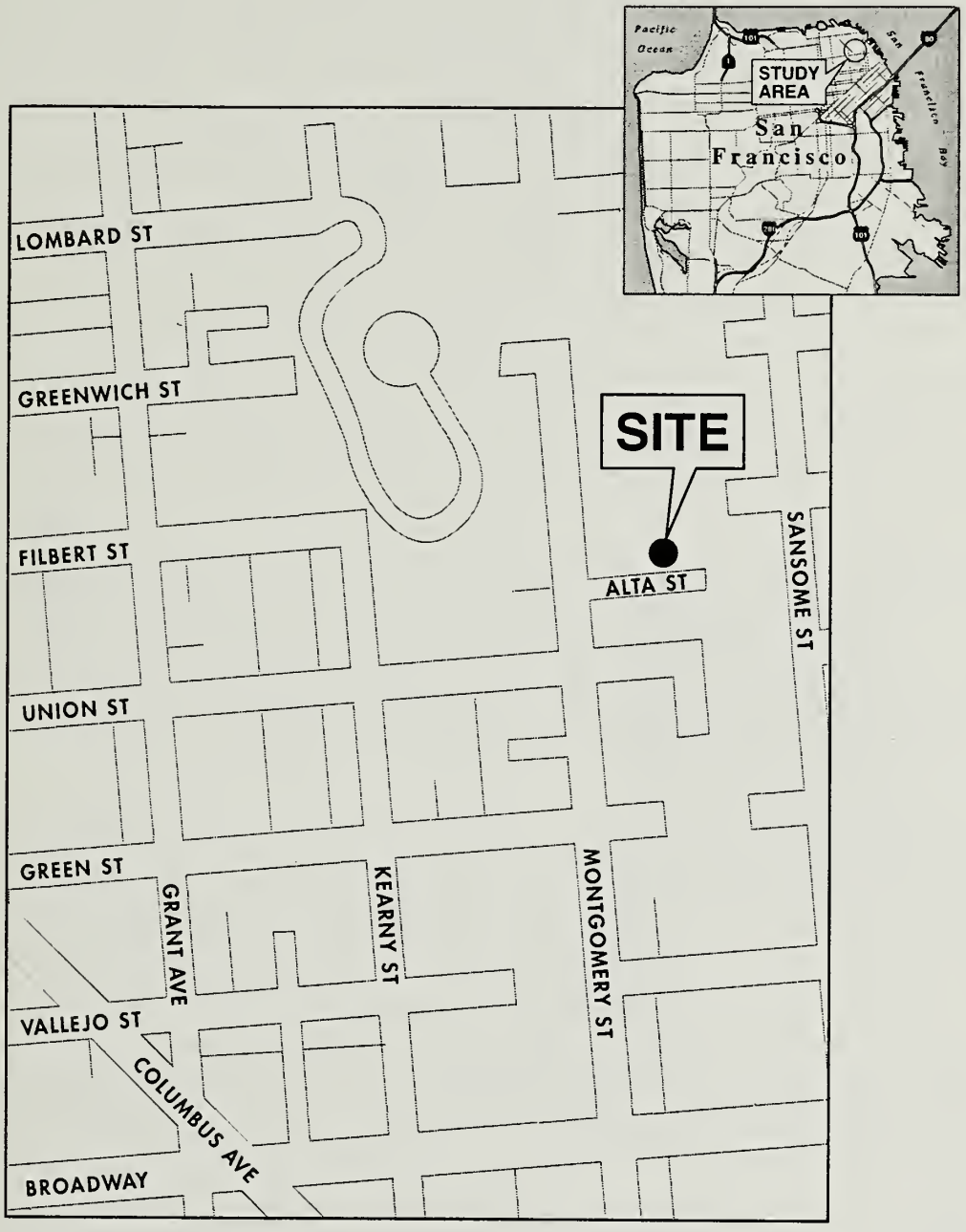
[1] Because of the steepness of the site, particularly along its eastern edge, it is likely that portions of the property are not suitable for development.

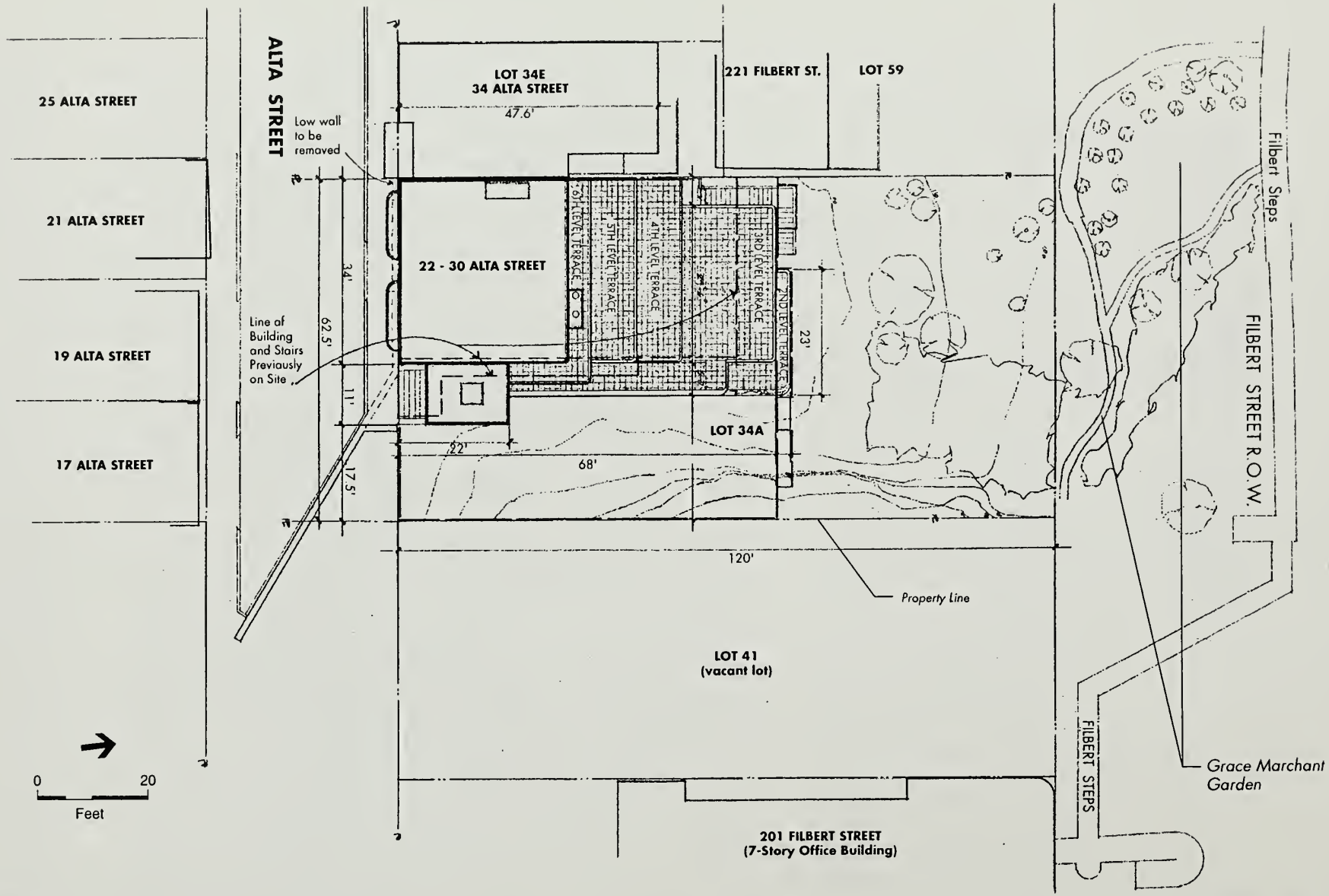
[2] According to Section 102.12B of the Planning Code, structures on downward sloping lots are measured at their centerline from the curb to roofline.



SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 1
Site Location Map



22–30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

Figure 2
Site/Roof Plan

The Alta Street (south) elevation would include two stories of bay windows with horizontal banding above a solid garage door (see Figure 3). An entrance along the eastern side of the south elevation would include metalwork and etched glass above the doorway and a skylight over the entrance lobby. The exterior would have a cement plaster finish. A building logo and the street name and address would be displayed on a cantilevered extension of the second-story facade that would serve to shelter the entry. The building design's Moderne references include curved terraces and building edges, cantilevered balconies, a cement plaster finish, horizontal window banding, and pipe terrace railings.

The western elevation of the building would primarily be adjacent to the existing apartment building at 34 Alta Street, however a portion of the proposed structure would extend beyond 34 Alta Street downslope to the north (see Figure 4). Each of the six levels of the building would include a terrace of varying size, that would wrap along the rear (north) and east-facing elevations of the building (see Figure 5). The southern portion of the east elevation would include an enclosed stairwell with three small rectangular windows at levels 3-5 and four rectangular glass block windows at levels 3-6 (see Figure 6).

Although the site is currently vacant, the Fred McNear Jr. Apartment Building was located there from 1935 to 1992.[3] This structure was a five-level, five-unit Moderne building of about 3,250 sq.ft. of occupied floor area and about 3,750 total sq. ft. (including lobby and circulation space). It rose one and one-half levels above Alta Street and extended three and one-half levels below Alta Street at the rear, or five stories in all, compared to six stories currently proposed. The McNear building had no on-site parking.

In 1992, while roadwork was being performed on Alta Street by the City that included removing the street's top concrete layer, two weeks of unexpected heavy rain fell on the City during what had been a drought year. The McNear building had been built with a shallow footing on the loose rock of the site and the rainfall led to the building's foundation being undermined. The concrete was subsequently replaced on the street, but the McNear building was ultimately deemed unsafe for habitation and demolished by the City. Subsequently, the City undertook major stabilization measures, including but not limited to: substantial scaling of loose rock, a pier-supported wall at the end of Alta Street, installation of rockbolting, and rockfall netting. The proposed project is intended to replace this destroyed building and takes cues from its Moderne architectural qualities.

The proposed project would include extensive efforts to ensure stability of the site and the structure proposed for the site. The remains of the foundation from the McNear building would first be removed. A system of vertical piers, up to as much as 40 feet deep, would be installed into the slope and restrained from lateral movement by a system of beams and walls. A drainage system that would include horizontal drains of more than 30 feet in length would be installed to insure proper site runoff.

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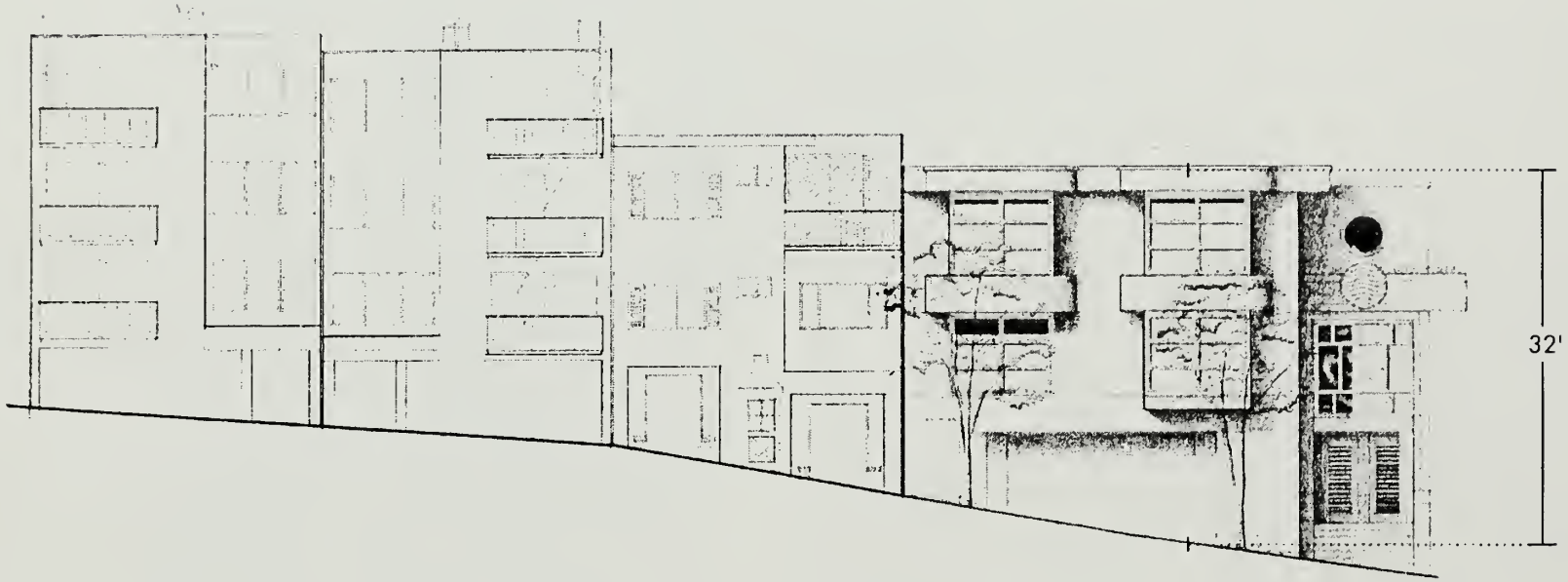
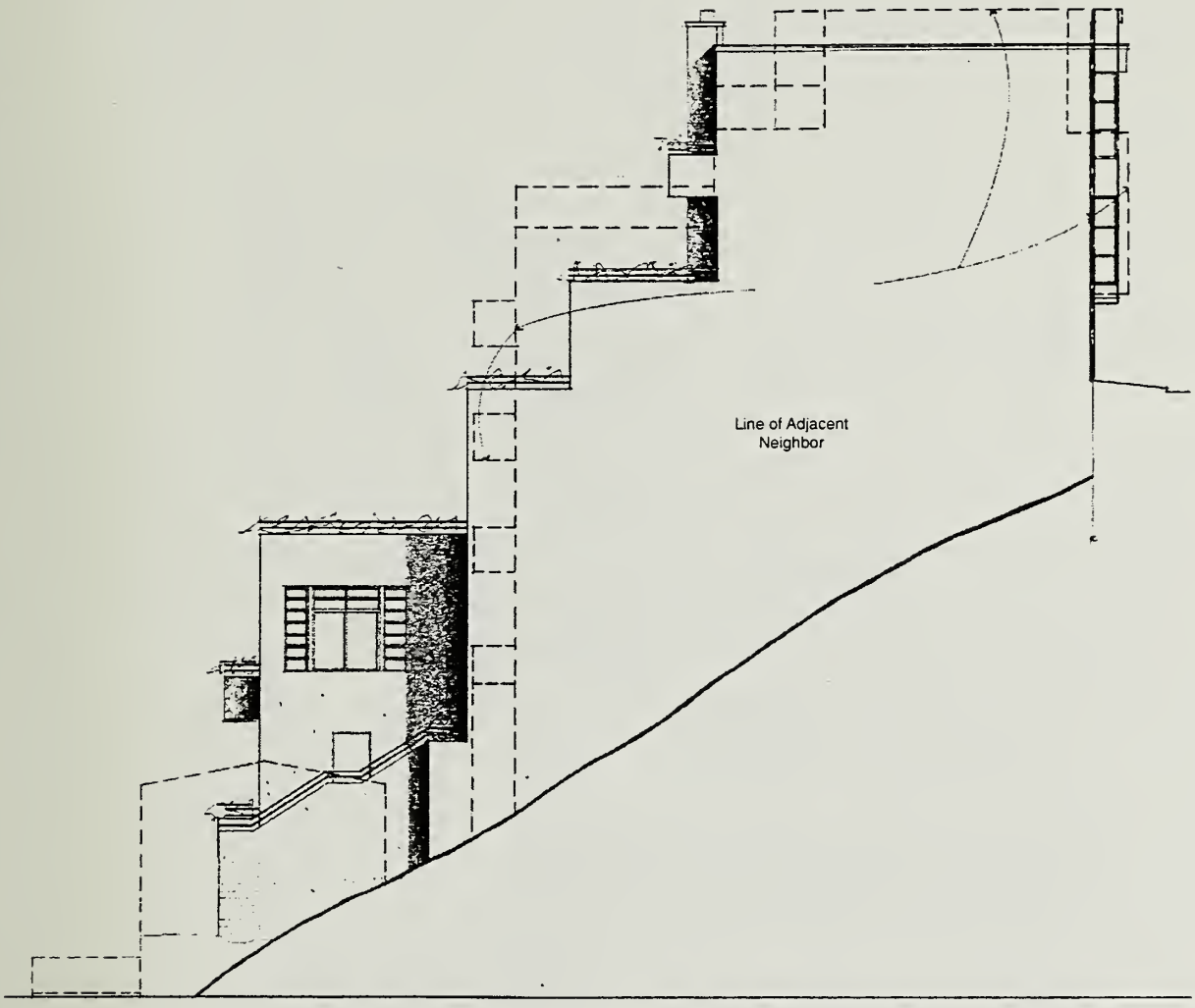
[3] Although not now referred to by this name, for purposes of this document, the former building located at 22-30 Alta Street will be referred to as the McNear building, after an early owner. According to David Myrick's *San Francisco's Telegraph Hill*, the former building is named the Fred McNear Jr., Apartment Building.



SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 3
South Elevation



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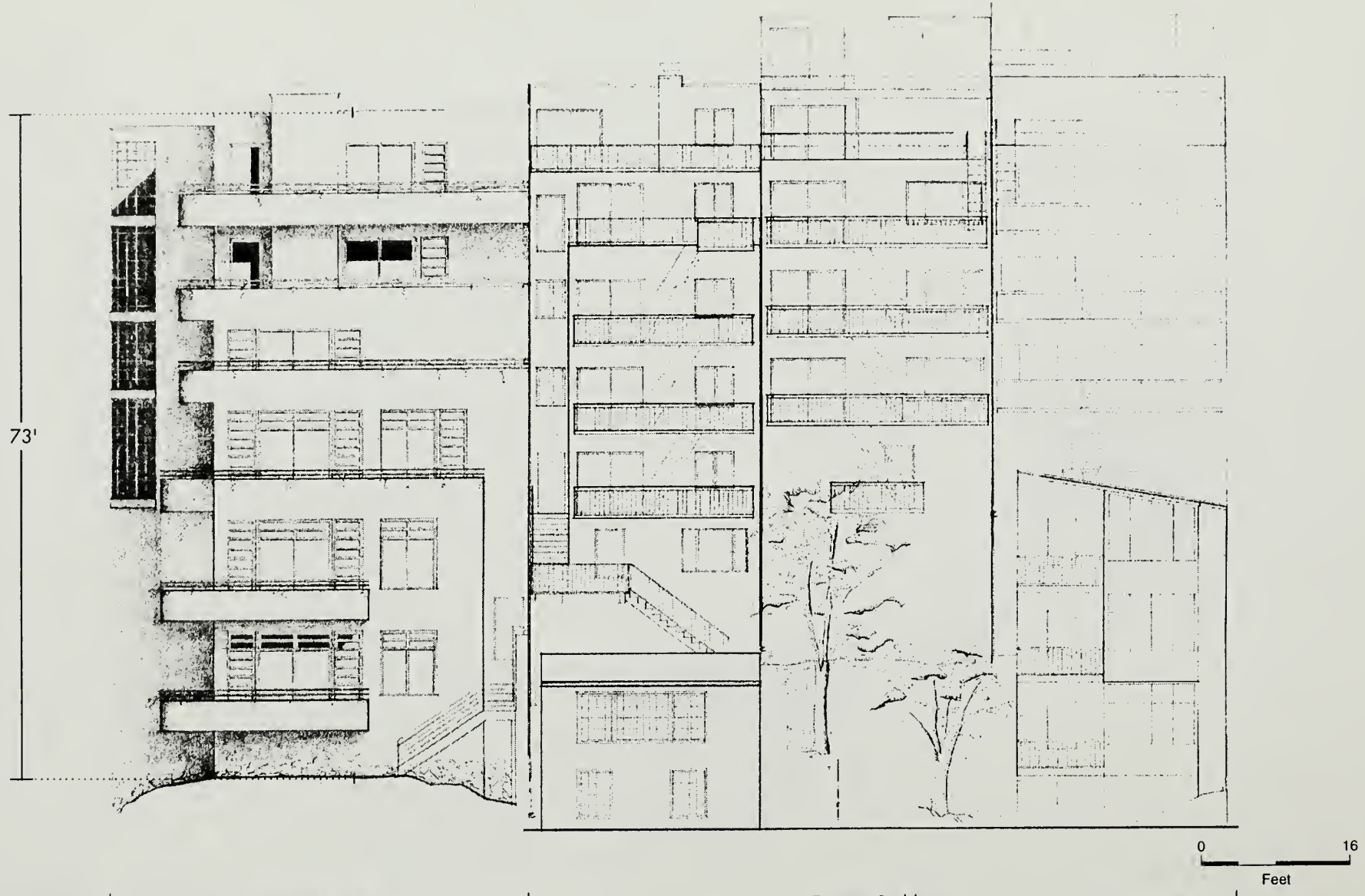
Feet

SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

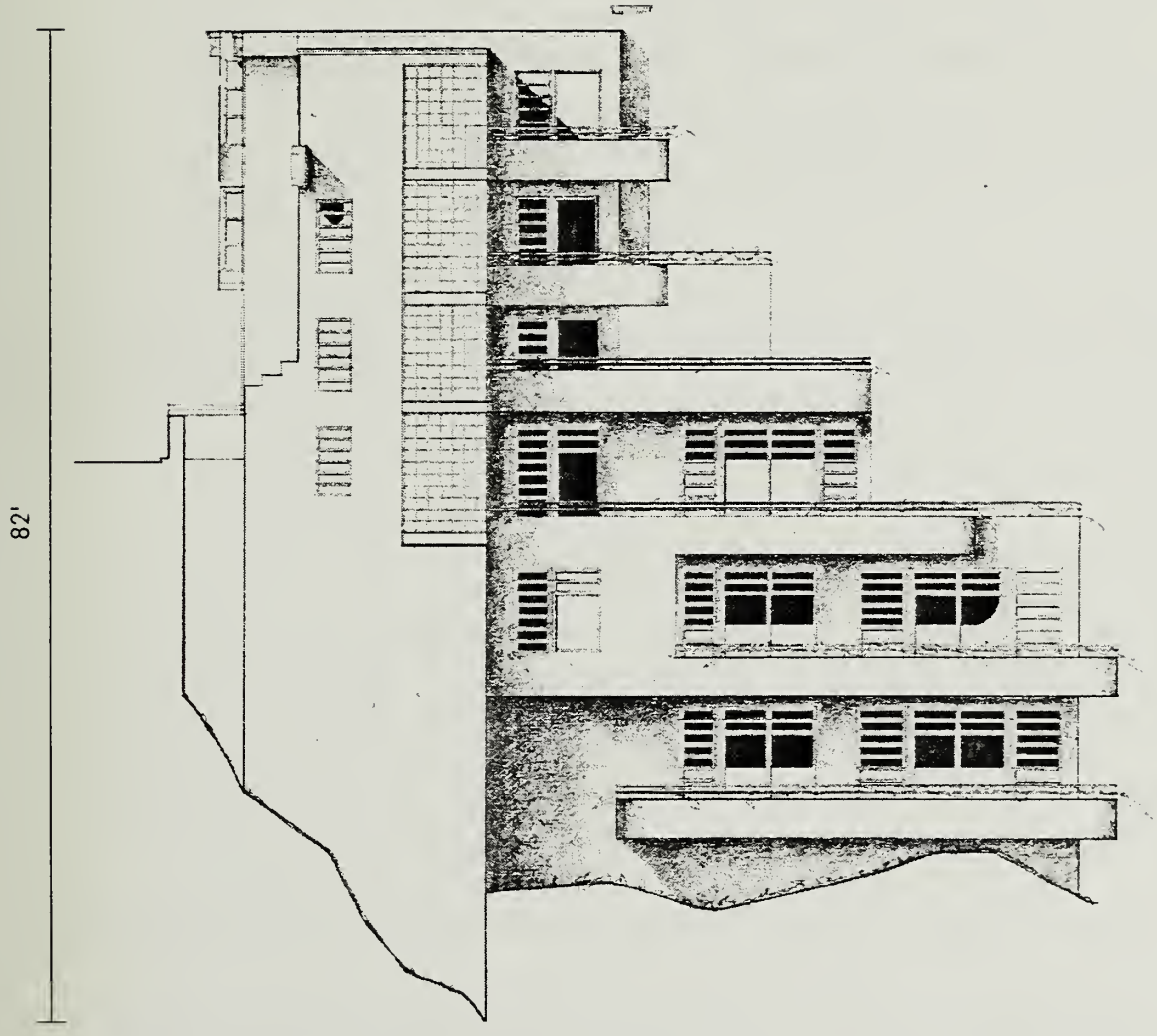
Figure 4
West Elevation



22 - 30 Alta Street ■

SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

Figure 5
North Elevation



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SOURCE: McEachron Architects Inc.

22 - 30 Alta Street ■

Figure 6
East Elevation

The project site is within an RH-3 (Three-Family) District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District (40 foot maximum height limit, no bulk limit). This district allows three units per lot and one unit per 1,000 sq.ft. of lot area as a conditional use (a maximum of seven units would be permitted on the subject site). The project would be a permitted use in the RH-3 District and would comply with the Planning Code requirements concerning height, bulk, and use of that district. Project construction would take about 12 months, with occupancy planned for late 1999.

II. SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

A. EFFECTS FOUND TO BE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT

The 22-30 Alta Street project is examined in this Initial Study to identify potential effects on the environment. Two project-specific effects, impacts on historic architectural resources and shadows, have been determined to be potentially significant and will be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Although no potentially significant land use, visual quality, biological, or geologic/seismic impacts have been identified, a discussion of these issues will be presented in the EIR for informational purposes. The biology and visual quality sections will be included in the EIR in order to fully address the effects upon historic architectural resources and the public open spaces of the Grace Marchant Garden and Filbert Steps.

B. EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The following potential impacts were determined either to be insignificant or to be mitigated through measures included in the project. These items are discussed in Section III below, and require no further environmental analysis in the EIR: population, transportation, noise, air quality, wind, utilities/public services, water, energy, hazards, and archaeological resources. As noted above, although no potentially significant land use, visual quality, biological, or geologic/seismic impacts have been identified, these issues will be addressed in the EIR for informational purposes only.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

A. COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING ZONING AND PLANS	Discussed	Not Applicable
1) Discuss any variances, special authorizations, or Changes proposed to the City Planning Code or Zoning Map, if applicable.	X	
* 2) Discuss any conflicts with any adopted environmental Plans and goals of the City or Region, if applicable.	X	X

The San Francisco Planning Code, which incorporates by reference the City Zoning Maps, governs permitted uses, densities and configuration of buildings within San Francisco. Permits to construct new buildings or to alter or demolish existing ones may not be issued unless the proposed project conforms to the Code or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the Code. The proposed project would comply with Planning Code requirements concerning height, bulk, and use in the RH-3 (Three-Family)

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

District and the 40-X Height and Bulk District (40-foot maximum height limit, no bulk limit) in which it would be located. The blocks surrounding the project site on Telegraph Hill are also zoned RH-3 and are within a 40-X Height and Bulk District. At the bottom of the hill, to the east along Sansome Street, is a C-2 (Community Business) use district.

The Planning Code states that in the RH-3 District ". . . structures with three units are common in addition to one-family and two-family houses. The predominant form is large flats rather than apartments, with lots 25 feet wide, a fine or moderate scale and separate entrances for each unit. Building styles tend to be varied but complementary to one another. Outdoor space is available at ground level, and also decks and balconies for individual units" (Section 206). The project would be a permitted use in the RH-3 District. Except for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the proposed project would require no special authorizations pursuant to the Planning Code.

The Department of Building Inspection would require a building permit for the construction of a new building. The Department of Public Works would require a minor street encroachment permit to rebuild the curb for access to the proposed parking garage.

The project site is located within the Telegraph Hill Historic District. Appendix G to Article 10 of the Planning Code sets forth additional review provisions for Certificates of Appropriateness, which may be granted by the City Planning Commission upon the advice of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) as part of the project approval for, among other things, any new construction in the district. These provisions include compatibility with the character of the historic district, compatibility with prevailing heights (both topographic and built), and appropriateness of design. The proposed project would be subject to these provisions.

Environmental plans and policies, like the *'97 Clean Air Plan*, directly address physical environmental issues and/or contain standards or targets that must be met in order to preserve or improve specific components of the City's physical environment. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

The City and County of San Francisco *General Plan* provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions and contains some policies related to physical environmental issues. In general, potential conflicts with the *General Plan* are considered by the decisions-makers (normally the Planning Commission) independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision to approve, modify or disapprove a proposed project. Any potential conflict not identified here could be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project.

On November 4, 1986, the voters of San Francisco passed Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative, which added section 101.1 to the City Planning Code to establish eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of

commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA), or adopting any zoning ordinance or development agreement, the City is required to find that the proposed project or legislation is consistent with the Priority Policies. The case reports and/or motion and decision letter for the required Certificate of Appropriateness will contain the analysis determining whether the proposed project is in conformance with the eight Priority Policies.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

1 Land Use. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
(a) Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community?	___	X	X
(b) Have any substantial impact upon the existing character of the vicinity?	___	X	X

The proposed project would not change the established land use on the site. The site was occupied by an apartment structure with five dwelling units from approximately 1935 until 1992. Developed properties in the immediate vicinity, atop Telegraph Hill, are also residential uses and so the proposed project would be compatible with the surrounding uses. The proposed project would step down the hillside and include terraces on each level. The project would have six floors, three rising above Alta Street and three on the hillside below Alta Street. Because it would be generally consistent in use with surrounding buildings, the project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of the surrounding community nor would it have a substantial impact on the residential character of the vicinity. No further analysis of potential land use impacts is required, however the EIR will provide a brief land use section for informational purposes. Effects related to the relative size and mass of the proposed project to the surrounding properties and the historic district generally will be addressed in the Historic Architectural Resources section of the EIR.

2) Visual Quality. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?	___	X	X
(b) Substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas?	___	X	X
(c) Generate obtrusive light or glare Substantially impacting other properties?	___	X	___

The proposed project would result in a visual change, since it would add a new building that ranges in height from 32 to 82 feet (depending on the location on the site) to a site that has been vacant since 1992.

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

The six-story (three stories above grade) structure would be Moderne in style and finished in cement plaster. The project would not alter the overall residential character of the existing neighborhood. In addition, the project would conform to all zoning regulations including height, dwelling unit density and setback requirements. As an infill residential project in an established neighborhood, compatible with the neighborhood's character, and in conformance with all zoning regulations, the project would not result in a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect. Potential impacts related to the project's compatibility with the Telegraph Hill Historic District are addressed below under the "Cultural" section and will be discussed in the Historic Architectural Resources section of the EIR.

Construction of a new building on the site would block public views from the sidewalk and street adjacent to the site and private views from the adjacent structure to the west and from buildings across Alta Street to the north. These views have only recently been available by virtue of the removal of the McNear building previously on the site. With three stories visible above street level, the project would be comparable in street-level height to the McNear building. The proposed project was designed to step down the face of the hill in a manner similar to the McNear building and other residential buildings in the vicinity. Scenic views to the north and east from the end of the developed portion (uphill) of Alta Street would be unaffected. Although noticeable, the change would be comparable to the results of the development on other sloping sites in San Francisco. The partial obstruction of views dominated by typical urbanized uses would not be considered substantial impairment of existing scenic views or vistas. However, in order to fully assess the potential effects on the Telegraph Hill Historic District, impacts resulting from the project's aesthetics and blockage of views will be discussed in the EIR.

The project would increase the amount of light emitted from the project site, but would not substantially increase ambient light levels in the project area. The project would not produce glare affecting other properties. Potential effects from light and glare created by the project will not be discussed in the EIR.

3) Population. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Induce substantial growth or concentration of population?	___	X	X
* (b) Displace a large number of people (involving either housing or employment)?	___	X	X
(c) Create a substantial demand for additional housing in San Francisco, or substantially reduce the housing supply?	___	X	X

As a residential urban infill development on a site that formerly supported a residential structure, the project would not induce growth or a concentration of population. No people would be displaced, in terms of housing or employment, as a result of the project. The project would not increase demand for housing; it would add three condominium units to the local housing supply. Population and housing require no further analysis in the EIR.

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

4) Transportation / Circulation. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?	___	X	X
(b) Interfere with existing transportation systems, causing substantial alterations to circulation patterns or major traffic hazards?	___	X	___
(c) Cause a substantial increase in transit demand which cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity?	___	X	X
(d) Cause a substantial increase in parking demand which cannot be accommodated by existing parking facilities?	___	X	X

The project would result in the addition of three residential units to an established residential neighborhood on a site that from 1935-1992 supported a five-unit residential structure. The increased demand on the local transportation system, including increased traffic and increased transit demand, would not cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system.

Project construction would create temporary adverse impacts on the transportation and circulation system in the vicinity of the site. Because the project site is located at the end of a narrow dead-end street it would likely be difficult for construction vehicles to negotiate movement along the street or turn around at the end of the street. Alta Street's intersection with Montgomery Street allows only right turns onto Montgomery, which is also a dead-end. This intersection and the dead-end of Montgomery would also be difficult for large vehicles to negotiate. As a result, it is likely that residents on Alta Street and parts of Montgomery Street would be inconvenienced due to the temporary need for portions of the street to be free of parked cars, vehicles blocking entrances to the streets, or slow moving vehicles.[4] However, because of the temporary and intermittent nature of these impacts, they would not be considered significant.

The Telegraph Hill neighborhood has a shortage of on-street and off-street parking availability. The three-unit project would include parking for five vehicles and thus exceed the Planning Code requirement of one new off-street parking space for each new dwelling unit. The project would also result in the elimination of two on-street parking spaces due to the creation of a driveway to serve the building's garage. The net increase in parking of three spaces would be less than the project demand of

[4] The Department of Public Works requires a street space permit for any use of the public right-of-way during construction and does not allow use of the sidewalk, driveways or streets in front of off-site properties without their owners' consent.

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

five spaces.[5] Thus, the project would incrementally increase the existing parking shortfall in the area. Increase in parking demand relative to supply would potentially result in drivers parking farther from their destinations. However, the incremental increase in demand generated by the project (2 spaces) would not be substantial, and would not be considered a significant effect. Transportation and circulation require no further analysis in the EIR.

5) Noise. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas?	___	X	X
(b) Violate Title 24 Noise Insulation Standards, if applicable?	___	X	X
(c) Be substantially impacted by existing noise levels?	___	X	___

Demolition, excavation, and building construction would temporarily increase noise in the site vicinity. The construction period, including demolition of the remnant building foundation, would last approximately 12 months. Construction noise levels would fluctuate depending on construction phase, equipment type and duration of use, distance between noise source and listener, and presence or absence of barriers.

During the construction period, temporary construction noise would be noticed by neighboring residents. Construction noise is regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the City Police Code). The ordinance requires that noise levels from individual pieces of construction equipment, other than impact tools, not exceed 80 dBA at a distance of 100 feet from the source. Impact tools (such as jackhammers and impact wrenches) must have both intake and exhaust muffled to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. Section 2908 of the Ordinance prohibits construction work between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., if noise would exceed the ambient noise level by five dBA at the project property line, unless a special permit is authorized by the Director of Public Works.

At times during construction, noise levels would disturb surrounding residents. There would be times when noise would interfere with indoor activities in nearby residences adjacent to the project site. Noise impacts would be temporary in nature and limited to the period of construction. Therefore, they are not considered significant environmental impacts.

As a development consisting of three residential units, on top of Telegraph Hill, and at the end of a dead-end street, the project would result in a minimal increase in traffic at area intersections, and it therefore would not result in perceptibly greater traffic noise levels than those existing in the area.

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[5] Based on demand of 1.5 spaces per multi-bedroom unit, from San Francisco's Department of City Planning *Guidelines for Environmental Review, 1991.*

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

Title 24 of the California code of Regulations limits interior noise levels for new multi-family residential developments to 45 dBA. Noise reduction measures will be incorporated into the building design. Construction-related noise, effects related to noise-sensitive receptors, and operational noise anticipated following construction of the project would not be considered significant for reasons stated above, and will not be analyzed in the EIR.

	6) Air Quality/Climate. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
*	(a) Violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	___	X	X
*	(b) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	___	X	X
	(c) Permeate its vicinity with objectionable odors?	___	X	X
	(d) Alter wind, moisture or temperature (including sun shading effects) so as to substantially affect public areas, or change the climate either in the community or region?	X	___	X

Air Quality

Construction of the project would temporarily affect local air quality. It would not involve the burning of any materials or the creation of any objectionable odors. Construction activities would temporarily affect local air quality for about 12 months, causing a temporary increase in particulate dust and other pollutants. Construction-related effects on air quality generally would be limited to emissions from construction equipment and construction workers' vehicles, as well as from limited demolition. The project sponsor would require the contractor to wet down the construction site twice a day during construction to reduce particulates by at least 50 percent; the use of covering soil, sand and other material; and street sweeping around demolition and construction sites at least once per day (see mitigation, p. 22). Construction-related effects would not be expected to increase the frequency of violations of air quality standards. According to the Bay Area Air Quality District (BAAQMD), the determination of significance with respect to construction emissions should be based on a consideration of the control measures to be implemented and not on a quantification of emissions. If all of the BAAQMD's standard recommended control measures will be implemented, then construction activities would be considered a less than significant impact. All of the BAAQMD's standard control measures are included in the proposed project.

Because of the project's limited size, there would be no measurable operational impacts on air quality. Potential air quality effects therefore require no further analysis and will not be included in the EIR.

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

Shadow

The proposed project would cast shadow on surrounding properties and areas that are subject to regular public use, most notably the Grace Marchant Garden and the Filbert Steps, both features of the Telegraph Hill Historic District specifically referred to in Article 10, Appendix G of the Planning Code. Thus, shadow impacts of the project on these areas will be addressed in the EIR.

Wind

Wind impacts are generally caused by large building masses extending substantially above their surroundings, and by buildings oriented such that a large wall catches a prevailing wind, particularly if such a wall includes little or no articulation. The project itself would not be tall enough to be expected to generate substantial wind effects. Potential wind effects require no further analysis and will not be included in the EIR.

7) Utilities/Public Services. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Breach published national, state or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control?	___	X	___
* (b) Extend a sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development?	___	X	___
(c) Substantially increase demand for schools, recreation or other public facilities?	___	X	___
(d) Require major expansion of power, water, or communications facilities?	___	X	X

The proposed project would incrementally increase demand for and use of public services and utilities on the site and increase water consumption, but not in excess of amounts expected and provided for in the project area, and would not be expected to have any measurable impact on public services or utilities. This topic requires no further analysis and will not be included in the EIR.

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

8) Biology. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of the species?	___	X	X
* (b) Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants, or interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife Species?	___	X	X
(c) Require removal of substantial numbers of mature, scenic trees?	___	X	X

The project site was occupied by a residential structure from 1935 to 1992. Remnants of the previous structure's concrete foundation remain on the site. The project would not affect any threatened, rare or endangered plant life or habitat. The project would not interfere with any resident or migratory species. The project would not result in the removal of a substantial number of trees. The proposed project would cast shadow on the Grace Marchant Garden, but would not have a substantial adverse effect on endangered plants or habitat of such plants. However, to assess the impacts on the Garden as an element of the Telegraph Hill Historic District, biological impacts of the project will be addressed in the EIR for informational purposes.

9) Geology/Topography. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Expose people or structures to major geologic hazards (slides, subsidence, erosion and liquefaction)?	___	X	X
(b) Change substantially the topography or any unique geologic or physical features of the site?	___	X	___

The site has been subject to rockfalls several times since the 1960s. Most recently, in 1992, as a result of roadwork being performed on Alta Street by the City, the foundation of the McNear building that was located on the site at the time was undermined. The structure was ultimately deemed unsafe for habitation and was demolished by the City.

The project site is not located within a Seismic Hazards Study Zone (SHSZ) designated by the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG), as shown on the Map of Seismic Hazards Study Zones - Area of Liquefaction Potential (Map 4) of the San Francisco General Plan Community Safety Element. However, the history of the site, as described briefly above, indicates occurrences of hazardous land/rock movements at and near the site and it is located in an area susceptible to landslide as indicated on Map 5 of the San Francisco *General Plan* Community Safety Element.

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

The proposed project would be required to conform to the San Francisco Building Code, which ensures the safety of all new construction in the City. The final building plans would be reviewed by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). In reviewing building plans, DBI refers to a variety of information sources to determine existing hazards and assess requirements for mitigation. Sources reviewed include maps of SHSZs and known landslide areas in San Francisco as well as the building inspectors' working knowledge of areas of special geologic concern. In addition, the Building Code also contains provisions that require that grading on slopes of greater that 2:1, or where cut sections will exceed 10 vertical feet, must be done in accordance with the recommendations of a soil engineering report prepared by a California-licensed geotechnical engineer prior to construction. Potential geologic and landslide hazards would be mitigated during the permit review process through these measures.

Section 7(h) of Appendix G of the Planning Code requires that the required Certificate of Appropriateness application include a geologic study made by a licensed civil engineer for properties in the designated cliff areas. The property is not in a designated cliff area and therefore this provision does not apply to this site. However, the project sponsor has had geologic reports completed by licensed engineers. The findings of these reports will be discussed and evaluated in the EIR for informational purposes. This topic will be discussed further in the EIR for informational purposes.

10) Water. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Substantially degrade water quality, or Contaminate a public water supply?	____	X	____
* (b) Substantially degrade or deplete ground-Water resources, or interfere substantially With groundwater recharge?	____	X	X
* (c) Cause substantial flooding, erosion or Siltation?	____	X	____

Due to the construction of a structure on a vacant site, the project would increase the area of impervious surface on the site and therefore would alter the drainage pattern of the site. Because the site is so steep, however, drainage patterns would not be substantially altered from their current patterns and runoff would continue to drain into the City's combined sanitary and storm sewer system. Conditions with regard to runoff would be similar to those that existed prior to demolition of the previous structure on the site. This topic requires no further analysis and will not be included in the EIR.

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

11) Energy/Natural Resources. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Encourage activities which result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy, or use these in a wasteful manner?	___	X	X
(b) Have a substantial effect on the potential use, extraction, or depletion of a natural resource?	___	X	___

The project would meet current state and local codes concerning energy consumption. It would not cause a wasteful use of energy. Energy consumption and natural resources require no further analysis and will not be discussed in the EIR.

12) Hazards. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
* (a) Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the area affected?	___	X	X
* (b) Interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans?	___	X	X
(c) Create a potentially substantial fire hazard?	___	X	X

Other than for limited remnants of the concrete foundation from the building previously located on the project site, the project would not involve any demolition. As a result, there would be no hazardous materials disposed of as a result of demolition at the site. There is no history of on-site use of hazardous materials and therefore there would be no potential for exposure to hazardous materials by workers or residents. Hazardous materials issues do not require further analysis and will not be discussed in the EIR.

San Francisco ensures fire safety primarily through provisions of the Building Code and the Fire Code. Existing buildings are required to meet standards contained in these codes. In addition, the final building plans for any new residential project greater than two units is reviewed by the San Francisco Fire Department (as well as the Department of Building Inspection) in order to ensure conformance with these provisions. The proposed project would conform to these standards, which may also include development of an emergency procedure manual and an exit drill plan. In this way, potential fire hazards (including those associated with hydrant water pressure and emergency access) would be mitigated during the permit review process.

Further, because the project would be in an established residential neighborhood and the nature of the proposed use is the same as the use that occupied the site from 1935-1992, the proposed project would not interfere with emergency response/evacuation plans or create a substantial fire hazard by limiting

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

access to the site or neighborhood to the Fire Department. Emergency response and fire hazard issues do not require further analysis and will not be discussed in the EIR.

	13) Cultural. Could the project:	Yes	No	Discussed
*	(a) Disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or Historic archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study?	___	X	X
	(b) Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area?	___	X	X
	(c) Conflict with the preservation of buildings subject to the provisions of Article 10 or Article 11 of the City Planning Code?	X	___	X

Archaeological Resources

Because of the site's location on a steep hill, it is unlikely that any prehistoric cultural resources exist. Because the site supported a residential structure between 1935 and 1992, and because limited excavation is proposed as part of the project for installation of drilled piers and new foundations, it is unlikely that subsurface historic cultural resources, if any, would be disturbed. No further discussion of subsurface cultural resources will be included in the EIR.

Recreational Resources

The proposed project site is located adjacent to the Filbert Street right-of-way within which are located the Grace Marchant Garden (Garden) and Filbert Street Steps (Steps), both public recreational resources used by local residents and visitors to the neighborhood. Although the project would have the potential for adverse effects due to shadowing (as addressed above under the "Air Quality/Climate" section), there would not be the potential for the project to substantially diminish or conflict with the established recreational uses of the Garden and Steps.The Garden and Steps were used as recreational resources in a manner similar to how they are currently used during the period in which the McNear building occupied the project site. The site was in shade for much of the year due to existing topography and the presence of the prior building. Subsequent to construction of the proposed project, residents would likely continue to use these resources and the extension of private yards into the Garden as public open space. Similarly, visitors to Telegraph Hill would continue to use the Steps and visit the Garden. Further, construction activity for the proposed project would not result in direct impacts on the Garden or Steps. Recreational impacts of the project on these resources will, however, be addressed in the Land Use section of the EIR.

Historic Architectural Resources

The proposed project site is located in the Telegraph Hill Historic District, as established by Article 10, Appendix G of the Planning Code. The project would have the potential to affect this district. The

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

project's potential effects on historic architectural resources and other contributing elements of the district as prescribed in the Planning Code will be discussed in the EIR.

C. OTHER	Yes	No	Discussed
Require approval and/or permits from City Departments other than Department of City Planning or Department of Building Inspection, or from Regional, State, or Federal Agencies?	X		X

D. MITIGATION MEASURES	Yes	No	N/A	Discussed
1) Could the project have significant effects if mitigation measures are not included in the project?	X			X
2) Are all mitigation measures necessary to eliminate significant effects included in the project?		X		X

The following are mitigation measures related to topics determined to require no further analysis in the EIR. The EIR will contain a mitigation chapter describing these measures, which are proposed as part of the project, and also including other measures which would be, or could be, adopted to reduce potential adverse effects of the project identified in the EIR.

Construction Air Quality

- The project sponsor would require the contractor(s) to sprinkle exterior demolition sites with water during demolition, excavation and construction activity; sprinkle unpaved exterior construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other material; cover trucks hauling debris, soil, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during demolition and construction at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor would require that the contractor(s) obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

E. ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives to the proposed project will be discussed in the EIR and will include the following:

A. No Project: The site would remain in its existing vacant condition. No new development would take place on the site.

B. Replacement Alternative: This alternative would involve the construction of a new structure on the site that would generally be a replica of the former Fred McNear Jr. Apartment Building that occupied the site from 1935 to 1992, except that this alternative, like the project, would include three residential units, rather than five units as existed in the prior building. Construction of this replacement structure would not create any new shadow effects or impacts to the Telegraph Hill Historic District when compared to the site's pre-1992 conditions, but could create new shadow impacts on surrounding properties and the Grace Marchant Garden when compared to existing conditions.

F. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Yes	No	Discussed
* 1) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history?	X	___	X
* 2) Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	___	X	___
* 3) Does the project have possible environmental effects which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Analyze in the light of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects.)	___	X	X
* 4) Would the project cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	___	X	___

G. ON THE BASIS OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

___ I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared by the Department of City Planning.

___ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures, numbers , in the discussion have been included as part of the proposed project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

X I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

for HILLARY E. GITELMAN
Environmental Review Officer
for

GERALD G. GREEN
Director of Planning

DATE: October 7, 1998

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

APPENDIX B: LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD FINAL CASE REPORT (AUGUST, 1985)

Note: Appendix to Case Report (including individual building listings) is not included here but is available at the Department of City Planning.

TELEGRAPH HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

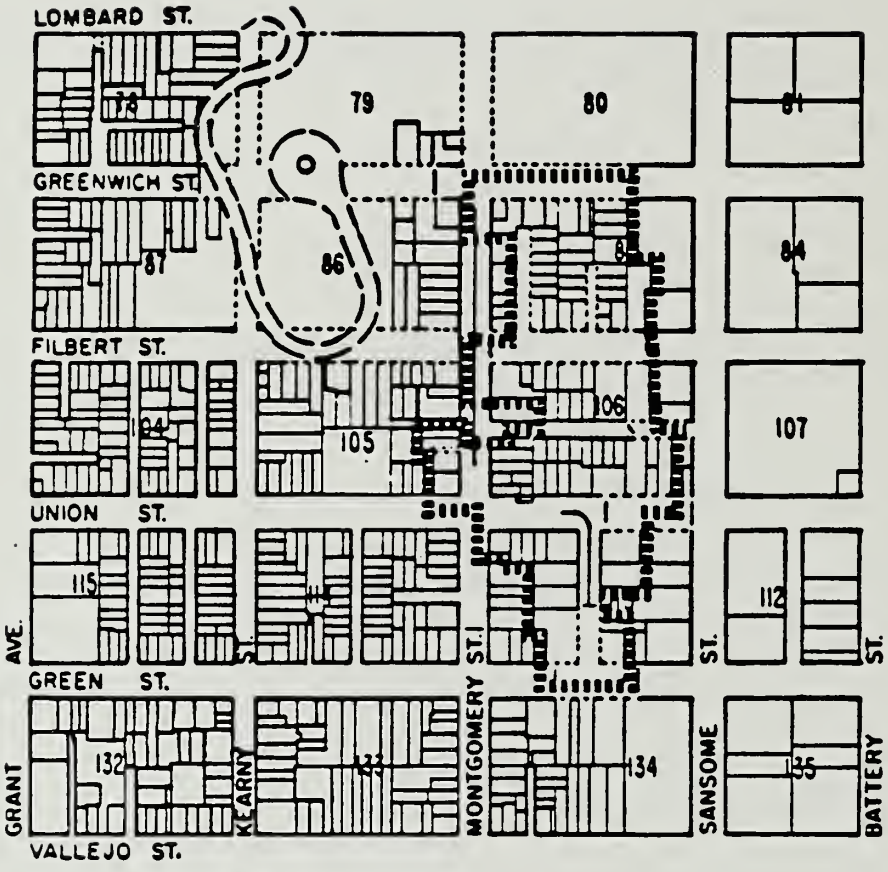
San Francisco

Prepared for

THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

by

Anne Bloomfield

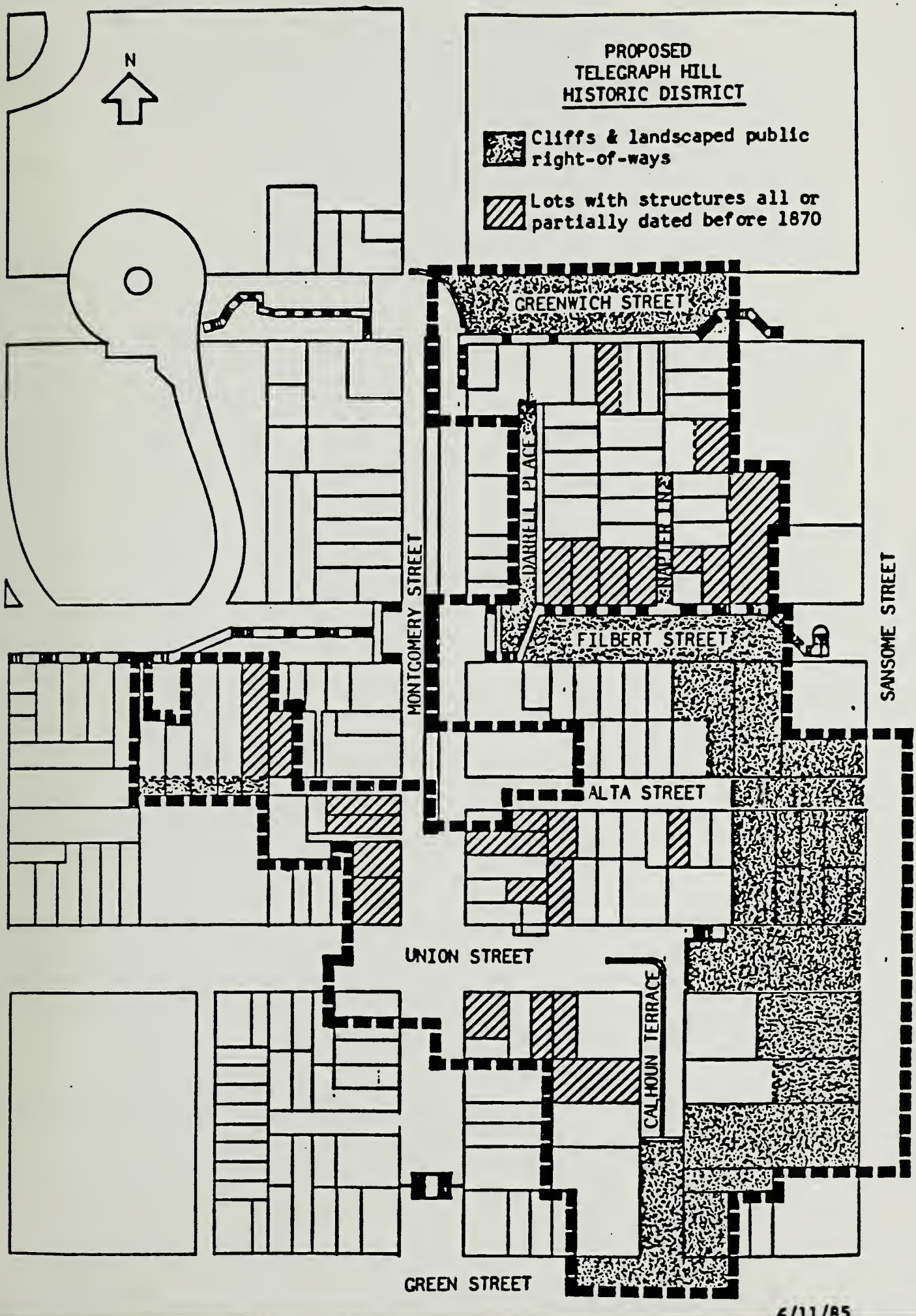


1" = 400'

Revised Boundary City Planning Commission

August 21, 1986

TELEGRAPH HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT


PROPOSED
TELEGRAPH HILL
HISTORIC DISTRICT
Cliffs & landscaped public right-of-ways
Lots with structures all or partially dated before 1870
N
GREENWICH STREET
DARRELL PLACE
NAPIER LN.
MONTGOMERY STREET
FILBERT STREET
SANSOME STREET
ALTA STREET
UNION STREET
CALHOUN TERRACE
GREEN STREET

6/11/85

FINAL CASE REPORT APPROVED 8/7/85 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
AMENDED 8/21/86 CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

NAME OF DISTRICT: Telegraph Hill
ADDRESSES: 1-62 Alta Street, 1-70 Calhoun Terrace, 20-62 Darrell Place, 211-283 Filbert Street, 220-260 Green Street, 221-285 Greenwich Street, 1254-1308, 1301-1315, 1360 and 1470 Montgomery Street, 8-34 Napier Lane, 1235-1245 Sansome Street and 200-296 Union Street.
BLOCK & Lot: Portions of Blocks 85, 105, 106, 113 and 114. See Map.
ZONING: RH-3 and OS.
ORIGINAL USE: Residential and a few stores.
EXTERIOR MATERIALS: Rustic or clapboard wood siding; stucco; shingles.
OWNER: See separate list.
NUMBER OF STORIES: 1 to 4.
LPAB VOTE: 5-3 (1 absent).

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:
(Describe special CHARACTER, or special HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL or AESTHETIC interest or value:) STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE. Telegraph Hill is one of the most famous hills in the world, as well known as Sugar Loaf in Rio de Janeiro, and a visual landmark to sailors entering the bay since its European discovery from sea by Capt. Juan Manuel de Ayala in the San Carlos on August 5, 1775. The second recorded European explorer to enter the Bay, Capt. George Vancouver in 1792, specifically mentioned the fine anchorage he had between two promontories, one of which was Loma Alta, the original name for Telegraph Hill. Telegraph Hill is famous as "the hill that's been around the world" as great portions of it were blasted out for ballast in sailing ships, "ultimately to be used to pave the streets of various exotic places." (Lotchin) The Hill's present configuration is the historical expression of the ravages created by quarrying. The rock was used not only for ballast, but also to build "rubble" Gold Rush era warehouses, to fill the Bay for flatlands east of the Hill, and to build the seawall which stabilized San Francisco's waterfront. The last quarrying occurred as late as 1914.

The Historic District is a unique expression of the pattern of development which took place on the east slope of Telegraph Hill from 1850 to 1941. Topographical constraints shaped the original settlement of the Hill. The difficulty of access on hillside and cliffs, and the proximity to the City's most active waterfront area first produced a community of waterfront workers housed in "cloth lined" shacks and modest vernacular Gothic Revival houses. Intact groupings of these buildings remain within the district, and comprise the City's largest concentration of pre-1870 residential structures. While other areas of the City experienced on-going development through the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Telegraph Hill remained isolated. Bypassed by cablecar or streetcar lines and with vehicular access limited to Union Street, infill residential construction from 1870-1935 was limited to small scale vernacular construction stylistically comparable to the earliest development on the Hill, with flat facades and minimum ornamentation. Due to the cliffside location, steps, wooden walkways and a hidden network of footpaths developed throughout the area. Street paving of Montgomery and Alta in 1931 and Union and Calhoun in 1939-1940 improved general accessibility, and heralded new development in the area. Moderate property values facilitated infill construction of noteworthy and (then) innovative designs. Among these are Richard Neutra's International style Kahn House at 66-70 Calhoun Terrace (1939), and the Art Moderne Malloch Apartment Building at 1360 Montgomery Street (1936). This change in style, scale, and pattern of development completes the district's period of significance.

The steep cliffs, a decisive factor in determining the historic development pattern of the area, are a highly significant and aesthetically important component defining the setting of the district. The abrupt changes in grade produce dramatic and unique vistas at points throughout the district. Unimproved street rights-of-way are valuable open spaces ranging in character from the well-tended, renowned Grace Marchant Gardens and Valetta's Gardens on Filbert and Greenwich Streets, to the rock face cliffs of Green and Calhoun Streets.

EVALUATION CRITERIA
ARCHITECTURE

1. Style: Cottages in vernacular, Gothic Revival, Italianate and Classical Revival styles. Apartments in Italianate, vernacular and various late 1930s styles.

2. Construction Type: Frame (except brick at 1301 Montgomery).

3. Construction Date: 1852-1869 (25 structures, 32.5%), 1870-1905 (15 structures, 19.5%, 1906-34 (8 structures, 10%), 1935-41 (12, structures, 16%), post 1941 (17 structures, 22%) 77 structures total.

4. Design Quality: Some buildings are very early, and simple in design. Most respond creatively to the steep slope. A few are important exemples of late 1930s styles. Some group together to form a "compound." The gardens and footpaths are a superb design element; with the cliffs they create an urban greenbelt.

5. Architect: Most owner-builders or occupant-builders. For 1935-41 structures: Richard Neutra, William Wurster, Gardner Dailey, Angus McSweeney, Irving Goldstine with Jack & Rolph Malloch, Louis Schelk, Fabre & Hildebrand.

6. Interior Quality: Not applicable.

HISTORY

7. Persons: Hiram Johnson, Governor, Senator, 1360 Montgomery, 1937-45.
Frieda Klussman, savior of the cable cars, 260 Green, 1935-current.
Grace Marchant, gardener & potter, 235 Greenwich then 8 Napier, 1933-82.
Dr. David G. "Yankee" Robinson, pioneer actor & producer, 9 Calhoun, 1854-56.
Helen Forbes, painter, 60 Alta, 1936-45.
Ralph Steckpole, sculptor, 37 Calhoun, 1928 (he is loosely connected with 37 Calhoun, intimately connected with 312 Filbert, out of the district).
Steve Bencroft, Chine Clipper pilot, 22 Alta, c. 1940.
Stenton Deleplane, newspeperman, 21 Alta, 1940.
David Myrick, writer, 261 Filbert.
Ward Albee, fireman & writer, 23 Napier & 40 Darrell, 1927-40.
Ien & Rose Hoeffler, builders of compounds, 38-60 Calhoun, 221 Filbert, 22-30 Alta, 1930s.
Charles "Tubby" Smith, prizefighter, 212 Union, 1905-08.

Significantly long residencies:
Bacigalupi family, fishermen, draymen, marbleworker, 9 Calhoun, 1877-current.
Brown family, stevedore, Assemblyman (George, 1901), 228 & 230 Filbert, 1869-1959.
Cooney family, grocer, house peinter, notions, teecher, district owner-builder; 291 Union, 287-289 Union, 112-114 Alta, 1852-1937.
Spediacci family, Speedy's New Union Grocery, 1914-current.
Desmond & Veletta Heslett, commercial ertist & gerdener, 235 Greenwich, c. 1935-current.

Artists: Cecilia Grahem, 1308 Montgomery, 1940.
Marion Montegue (Yureske), woodcarver, 1307 Montgomery, 1940.
Marjorie Slete, weaver, 291 Union, 1940.

8. Events: None.

9. Petterns of History: The steep slopes and limited eccess strongly influenced the erchitecture: weterfront workers' cottages and buildings thet step down the hillsides and relate closely to their environment. Attracted by the hill's close proximity to the wharves and ready view of arriving ships with job possibilities, weterfront workers built minimal shelter here, often with scavenged meteriels. Artists ceme for cheep rents. Benign neglect preserved the buildings. When street paving first begen to reduce isolation, moderate land costs permitted a few avant-garde buildings.

ENVIRONMENT

10. Continuity: All buildings relate to steep slope end contribute to gerden setting by ectuel gardens or planters. Smell scale throughout, in height, bulk end interiors. Footpeth environment due to unpaved street rights-of-wey, limited auto eccess, little parking, many private pethweys.

11. Setting: Outstanding urban greenbelt vital to residents' sense of community and residential quiet, to migratory bird flyway. Steep site protects district from urban noise, traffic and other pressures, creates need for footpaths which inspire gardeners and foster local community.

12. Importance as a Visual Landmark: An integral element of San Francisco's cityscape.

INTEGRITY

Pattern of occasional remodeling well established in 19th century. About a dozen structures have integrity seriously impaired through late 20th-century remodelings such as asbestos siding, aluminum sash, unpainted shingles and added stories. The gardens in rights-of-way and on cliffs are continually in the process of recreation.

RATINGS

Here Today: 2 text pages, 6 photos, 10 Appendix entries--22 buildings in all.

DCP Survey 1976: 21 buildings; 11 rated 5, 1 rated 4, 5 rated 2, 4 rated 1. On Napier Lane and the Filbert Steps one surveyor commented, "Setting is 5--buildings are 0's, 1's, and 2's (maybe). Other buildings on steps should be included. . . ALSO the community garden makes the setting, acres of flowers and baby tears" (emphasis original).

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

PREPARED BY: Anne Bloomfield, consultant, 2229 Webster, SF 94115, 922-1063.
DATE: July 2, 1985
EDITED BY: Jonathan Malone, August 2, 1985.

7073B
JHM:vr

TELEGRAPH HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES. The Telegraph Hill Historic District consists of about 100 properties and the adjacent public rights-of-way, on the northeastern slope of Telegraph Hill within the area saved from the 1906 Fire, as shown on the attached Map. It contains portions of Assessor's Blocks 85, 105, 106, 113, and 114. The properties face variously on Alta Street, Calhoun Terraces, Darrell Place, Filbert Street, Green Street, Greenwich Street, Montgomery Street, Napier Lane, Sansome Street and Union Street, as detailed in the Survey of Individual Structures and Properties below.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE. Telegraph Hill is legendary:

> "The distilled essence for which San Francisco is Famous." Here Today, p. 59.
>
> "First in historic interest" among the city's hills. Historic Spots in California, p. 363.
>
> "San Francico's most unique and magical living environment." David Gebhard, Guide..., p. 56.

The Historic District consists of Telegraph Hill's most characteristic residential features. There are two important groups of buildings and some unique open spaces. Nearly a third of the buildings are San Francisco's largest group of pre-1870 structures, eleven of them before 1860. It is the existing area best documented by 19th-century photographs. 1301 Montgomery is one of the City's three oldest brick buildings. The simple style, lack of bay windows and small scale of these very early waterfront workers' dwellings make them unprepossessing artchitecturally, but give today's viewer a real experience of life at a faraway time. The cliffs and hillsides and general difficulty of access shelter the District from the modern city, shape its residents into a special community and give them unparalled views. The cliffs, street rights-of-way and adjoining private open spaces have become a wondrous garden. Part is minutely tended, its roses seeming bigger than the houses, its carpet of tiny baby tears the perfect scale for the tiny buildings. The rest of the garden grows wild with abundant plant varieties originally set there by gardeners.

It is a de facto refuge for dozens of varieties of birds both resident and migratory, an important stop on San Francisco's eastern flyway. Among all this is a second group of important buldings, constructed as infill 1935-1941

by experimental designers trying to make their reputations, a group containing several famous buildings and together describing the milieu out of which rose the Second Bay Tradition style of architecture.

ZONING AND LAND USE. All the property is zoned RH-3 except for a strip of C-2 zoning that fronts on Sansome. Height and bulk is 40-X, except fronting Sansome where it is 84-E, and except the unpaved public rights-of-way of Filbert and Greenwich, which are OS. Land use is either residential (primarily small apartments), garden, or slide-prone cliffs, except for one historic small grocery at the south west corner of Union and Montgomery. Zoning and land use are specified by parcel in the Survey below.

QUALITY RATINGS. The Telegraph Hill Historic District rates two text pages, six pictures and ten Appendix entries in Here Today, 22 buildings altogether. The DCP Architectural Survey of 1976 rates eleven buildings as a "5" (highest), one as "4", five "2" and four "1": 21 buildings. On Napier Lane and the Filbert Steps, one 1976 surveyor commented, "Setting is 5 -- buildings are 0's, 1's, and 2's (maybe). Other buildings on steps should be included . . . ALSO the community garden makes the setting, acres of flowers and baby tears" (original emphasis).

COMPATIBILITY. In the Survey below, 69 properties are rated compatible, 21 incompatible, and 11 potentially compatible. 'Compatible' means the exterior appearance of the property makes some contribution, however great or slight, to the District's sense of time and place. 'Incompatible' means the property was constructed after the District's period of significance or is so severely altered on the exterior that restoration is highly unlikely. 'Potentially compatible' means the property would become compatible if restored to its historic exterior appearance.

ARCHITECTURE AND OPEN SPACE. The Telegraph Hill Historic District buildings display, via both original construction and additions, architectural developments in low-income housing from the early 1850s up to the Second World War. They include a large and varied collection of dwellings built before 1869. Generally the variations in shape and roofline from one house to the next lead to a perception of each house as a separate entity, rather than as part of a row. Scale is very small in height and bulk, interior as well as exterior. Ornamentation is sparse. Bay windows virtually do not exist because so many of the houses predate

their popularity; instead there are balconies. Buildings tend to step down hillsides, either one separate cube after another or as a single stepped structure. So many houses turn their backs to or do not front on the formal paved streets and instead relate to the steep hillside that the setting of walkways, gardens and cliffsides is itself an integral part of the District.

LOOKING SOUTH INTO THE DISTRICT.

The typical structure is a rectangle in plan, often with additions of rear shed(s) and/or porch(es) on the downhill or view side. Usually it has a difference of one, two or more floors between its uphill and downhill sides. Often it is one story at access level with lower floors added as the hill drops. It is clad in rustic wood siding, laid horizontally, and it has a gable roof with either barge boards or false front. Ornamentation is restrained: window and door surrounds tend to be wide boards without moldings, though some have modest entablatures; barge boards may be fanciful but remain two-dimensional cut-outs; brackets and cornices on the false fronts tend to be of the simplest. There are no Queen Anne or Stick style houses. Windows are often double hung, often two-over-two or four-over-four, or else wooden casements. Each building has landscaping, at minimum flower box(es) and a few pots.

212 UNION STREET

The one overriding design element is the setting. So rigid is the nineteenth-century grid plan and so steep the hillside -- by nature, by quarrying until 1914 and by intermittent slides ever since -- that the major lengths of the District's public rights-of-way have never been paved streets and are not likely to become so. Several of them (Filbert, Greenwich, Napier, Darrell and parts of Alta and Union) have instead been developed as footpaths with steps and gardens where the landscaping blurs distinctions between privately-owned land and public right-of-way. Other "streets" (Green, Calhoun, Union, Alta) are so steep that even gardening is limited, and modern Sanborn insurance maps still read "Impassable for Teams." The District's highest point is at 1254-62 Montgomery Street, but the original hill has been cut away to make a flat, paved intersection there, 218 ft. above sea level. At first the hill descends manageably, to about 196 ft. where Union splits for Calhoun, and on Montgomery to 202 ft. at upper Alta, 193 ft. at lower Alta, 172 ft. at the top of the Filbert Steps and 160 ft. at the top of the Greenwich Steps. The downward slope from Union to Alta is gentle; Filbert lies in a hollow that goes down from both Alta and Montgomery; the midblock distance from Filbert to Greenwich is another gentle slope. Napier, Darrell, upper Alta and Calhoun are almost flat. Then come

1171 SANSOME STREET

GREENWICH STREET FROM SANSOME

the cliffs. Green jumps down 140 ft. in about 150 linear ft.; Calhoun's upper terrace starts 20 ft. higher and meets Green on the way down, all in 120 linear ft. From pavement end to Sansome, Union drops 170 ft. in 185 ft., and Alta drops 150 ft. in 185 ft. The cliff at Filbert is only about 40 ft. in 40 ft., but the garden on top rises another 130 ft. in 270 ft. Likewise on Greenwich, the cliff leaps 40 ft. in about 40 ft., and the gardens on top rise some 110 ft. in 270 ft.

These hills restrict the District's auto access to just one feeder street, Union to the west. It is a city planner's model district, fingers of green penetrating a very urban setting. Less than one-fourth of the buildings face on regular streets, Union and Montgomery; nearly one-third face narrow dead-end alleys, Alta and Calhoun; nearly half face only footpaths, Greenwich, Filbert, Darrell, Napier and parts of Union and Alta. There are many additional private pathways known only to residents in the immediate locality. All these footpaths have been turned into a feast for the eye, a gardener's delight. On Filbert, Napier and Darrell the paths are planking; on other "streets" they are concrete. Some cliffsides have concrete steps, others are too tall and/or too unstable for any kind of access at all. At Union Street the foot of the cliffs has had to be reinforced and fenced to protect Sansome Street from slides.

UNION STREET
AT SANSOME

Gardens fill the remainder of the public rights of way and spill onto private property. On the gentler slopes they

VALETTA'S GARDEN

GRACE MARCHANT GARDENS

contain roses, camellias, fuchsias, lilacs, plerons and datura trees, banana plants and fruit trees. The ground is covered with baby tears. The green belt along Filbert is called Grace Marchant Gardens, after their long-term gardener; the one along Greenwich similarly is Valetta's garden. They are privately maintained. The cliff "gardens" are much more informal, an abundant plant community where 59 different species were observed during one three-hour period in 1982. Most are varieties that do not occur naturally in San Francisco and must originally have been planted there by someone. The plants help hold the hillside and give a wild appearance, providing sanctuary for many resident and migratory wild birds. One of the Hill's birdwatchers has compiled a list of 54 species observed from 1980-1982. The cliffs' verticality causes updrafts of air used by soaring birds of prey, and someone is said to feed the legendary parrots, which are here, too.

In the gardens and along the streets the typical structure described above occurs in several different building types. The smallest and most prevalent is the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate or vernacular cottage. Sometimes a group of such cottages is scattered in a landscape to form a "compound," for instance at 235 Greenwich and formerly at 265 Union. Another type, constructed before 1870, is a three-story structure covering the entire front width of its lot and featuring balustraded balconies at two or three levels, visible in many historic photos. Examples remain at 31 Alta, 110 Alta (remodeled), 21 Napier, 1308 Montgomery (remodeled) and 291 Union. There is just one very early and simple flat-roofed brick commercial structure, stuccoed over 60 years ago and now residential. The District has no Stick-Style or Queen Anne houses. After 1906, infill buildings continued the two main types (minus balustrades), but sometimes with variations such as Colonial Revival ornament at 107 Alta and 293 Union, Craftsman windows at 118 Alta and 23 Napier, bay windows and stucco at 116 Alta, internal balconies on the vertical "Romeo" apartment at 273 Filbert.

Just before World War II, the District received a dozen new buldings of experimental designs; some of the architects graduated to fame: Richard Neutra, William Wurster, Gardner Dailey. These structures emphasize views and horizontality. They relate positively to their hillsides and gardens. All but one are stucco-faced. Ornament is sparse, individual to each and part of the wall plane. This group consists mainly of 22-30 and 60-62 Alta, 38-50 and 66-70 Calhoun, 261-265 and 267-71 Filbert, 260 Green and 1360 Montgomery.

Alterations have been occurring throughout the District's 133 years. Originally, many structures were plank-frame shacks apparently thrown up by their residents for

BUILDING TYPES

221 Greenwich Street

228 Filbert Street

31 Alta Street

The Heslett Compound

elementary shelter. Similar residents later would add a room, or a shed or a balcony or a "modern" false front. Such changes are numerous, but only a few can be documented. 218-220 Filbert existed from 1862 as a small cottage, of which wide and irregular horizontal boards and battens are visible on the east side basement. In 1882 its owner signed a contract listed in California Architect & Building News for a "2-story frame building," today's first and second floors; some of its entry doors look like ones common about 1910. The existence of 10 Napier Lane can be traced back to the U.S. Coast survey map researched in 1857. This original board-frame cottage was set back 3-4 feet from the Napier right-of-way and can be distinguished today by a change in roof shape. The 1886 Sanborn map still shows the early

218-220 Filbert Street

10 Napier Lane

building, labeled "cloth lined." Shortly afterwards, the Italianate front was added. Similarly, 1254-62 Montgomery appears in 1886 as a one-story building only two units wide as photos so show it; by 1891, it was what we see today. Historic photos show the false front salesmen of the 1870s and 1880s as prevalent as the asbestos siding and aluminum sash salesmen of more recent years. 1301 Montgomery, the brick building of 1852, was stuccoed probably early in the twentieth century, perhaps as earthquake repair, but certainly well before a mid-1920s photo. It has also undergone substantial changes of entry, documented by permits for instance in 1910, 1915, and 1918, but its main character remains. Comparison of Sanborn maps over the years shows many a building with a constant core that has accumulated a string of rear additions and that may have gained or lost balconies or platforms. In recent years such changes have continued, adding new materials like aluminum, asbestos, and unpainted shingles. The Here Today survey of the mid-1960s documents many such alterations. Finally, there is the case of 1308 Montgomery, which was stripped and later partly restored. Alterations are part of the District's history and description.

HISTORY: INTRODUCTION. The Historic District's first two houses were built during the operation (April 1850-September 1853) of the semaphore, or visual telegraph, that stood near the site of Coit Tower to signal the arrival of ships, and that gave Telegraph Hill its name. By 1860 there were nine more houses that exist today in one form or another, and by the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, some 25 houses, nearly 30% of the District's supply, were functioning. Continuing construction increased the stock by 18 buildings and several additions before the 1906 earthquake and fire. Their rescue from the fire is a whole story in itself. Another whole story is the quarrying that shaped Telegraph Hill's cliffs and left them subject to slides to this day. Between the 1906 fire and the 1941 beginning of World War II, 26 more buildings went up, including a group of architecturally significant ones beginning in 1935. By that year residents had commenced the gardens as we know them today.

During most of the District's period of significance, c. 1853-1941, the people who lived there were poor. The majority worked on the waterfront as longshoremen, stevedores, laborers, riggers, draymen or warehouse workers, or were the dependents of such men. The Hill was inaccessible except on foot, and its attractions for the waterfront workers lay in its cheapness and its views which could give advance notice of incoming ships so the men could hurry down and try to find work. In the twentieth century the

cheapness and views also attracted artists, the initial step toward today's upscale image, but as long as the District remained accessible only on foot, its poverty, visible in a 1920s photo, kept away anyone who could afford to live elsewhere. Only when the streets were paved -- Montgomery and Alta in 1931, Union and Calhoun in 1939-1940, did the economic picture begin to change. The poverty had caused construction of very modest dwellings; it preserved them and prevented their replacement; and in its waning years it permitted some artists and artist-minded people to hire fledgling architects to construct a remarkable group of experimental designs. In the 1980s affluance threatens these architectural remnants of a remote era (1400 Montgomery of the 1860s was replaced only in 1984), and to survive they need protective legislation.

HISTORY: BUILDINGS. It is impossible to determine whether the District's first extant building was 1301 Montgomery or 291 Union. Both appear on the U.S. Coast Survey map of 1853. The Montgomery Buiding (see historic photos) is an anomaly: the only brick structure anywhere in the neighborhood. Its pre-1870 photo shows a dignified and simple brick commercial building like many that appear down in the flat commercial district in R. G. Fardon's photos of San Francisco published in 1856. The 1853 map date indicates this building is older than all but two in the Jackson Square Historic District; it may be the City's oldest extant brick building. It is mentioned in Historic Spots in California (3rd edition, p. 363). What was such a building doing 200-odd feet above the waterfront? It may have been constructed on the assumption that the semaphore would attract a busy commerce. Maybe the owner had some kind of factory or brewery in mind. The speculative idea, whatever it was, seems not to have worked out, for the building has had a checkered history, quite unclear at this time. The Alcalde (mayor) granted the land in July, 1847 to Anthony Durkin, who had come with J. D. Stevenson's regiment from New York for the Mexican War and was later a policeman, then a brewer. Durkin and his wife Celia each signed with a mark their deed of this 50x50-foot lot to John Carter on January 14, 1850. The price was $1,041, seven or eight times what was paid for the small lot of 291 Union in August of the same year, but one-third the price of 1252-1262 Montgomery in July. The January date is two-three weeks before the idea of the semaphore was published in the Alta newspaper. The price may indicate the brick building was already there, or it may simply reflect speculative land values that week. In any case, Carter sold the property to John Sweeney on 27 February 1851 for $800. Sweeney in turn sold it to Thomas Johnson on 30 September 1851 for $400. By 21 May 1853, when Johnson sold off the land for 1303 Montgomery to James

Rogers for $700, the brick building (according to the Coast Survey map) must have been there; its flat roof just peeks over the horizon of a photo in the 1856 Fardon book. As for uses, the first may have been the salesroom and "manufactory on Telegraph Hill" for Dr. Robinson's Celebrated Vegetable Bitters, advertised on p. 156 of the 1852 Directory as "composed entirely of California Vegetables." Dr. Robinson's house at #9 Calhoun , at which he was listed in 1854, is not on the 1853 map, nor had he even bought the property by that date. His Bitters factory could have been here, or in Hudson's mill at 1252 Montgomery, or anywhere on the Hill. Certainly located in the brick building in 1854 was the grocery of owner Thomas Johnson. That makes two groceries in the District in 1854; there must have been houses full of customers nearby at that date, but only one other existing house has so far been documented quite so early. The brick building also housed Sigmund Friedlander's grocery from 1881 through 1886 (directories), a barber shop about 1915 (permit), a pool hall in the 1920s (photo), and John Ortega's soft drinks, prohibition equivalent of a saloon, in 1928 (directory). The turn-of-the-century owner was Herman Meisel, a grocer across the street. Eventually the use settled down as totally residential. A series of photos shows the building crisply brick before 1870, run down and mostly plaster covered in the 1920s, and freshly plastered in the 1970s.

291 Union Street

The land at 291 Union Street was granted by the Alcalde in 1848 to wharf owner Benjamin R. Buckelew, who sold it on 2 August 1850 for $140 to John Cooney (1816-1879), whose heirs kept it in the family until 1937. Cooney bought the land next door, 287-89 Union, from Buckelew for $130 in 1852. The first directory to list him on this block was 1854; he kept a grocery store here. In June 1861 he signed for water service for both lots; until then, the family must have been using one of Telegraph Hill's many natural springs. By the 1875 directory, the family house had a street number, 291 Union. They were John Cooney, his wife Hannah, his public-school teacher daughter Ellen, and his sons William and John who were in business together as house and sign painters. David Myrick tells many stories of the Cooney family. Apparently, John was born in Ireland, his wife and their first two children in England, and the next two were born in Australia, whence the house's lumber is said to have come, an improbable story. The house was the first known of Telegraph Hill's multi-storied, much-balconied houses. Its store lasted until 1906. Early photos show barge board eaves instead of the Italianate false front, which must have been added about the 1880s to modernize the house and perhaps make the attic more liveable.

The third known house was #9 Calhoun, property and residence of Dr. David G. "Yankee" Robinson (c. 1807-1856). His Vegetable Bitters aside, the WPA San Francisco Theatre Research tells the full history of this physician-comedian-theater entrepreneur and host to fellow actors. The next known resident (1861-1869) was Calvin Tisdale Blake. Edwin Foster occupied the house in the 1870s and signed for the water in 1872, but his application notes the original order had been for C. F. Blake. By 1877 Angelo, Giambetto, Luigi and Paul Bacigalupi were listed here. The family still owns and resides here, though the turn-of-the-century Block Book series shows the owner's name as Fopiano, presumably a relative.

After these first three, the order of construction blurs. In the early days water service dates could be years after construction, or lost; directories and the manuscript Census gave no street numbers; landowners were often absentee, or changed before the earliest Block Book too often to trace. But U.S. Coast Survey and Sanborn fire insurance maps show specific buildings at specific dates. David Myrick has gathered an immense amount of information in his 1972 book, San Francisco's Telegraph Hill. Building permits and the Here Today survey photos, now 20 years old, give some information on remodelings. Earlier historic photos also provide invaluable data. All these sources have been rsearched to provide the dates of earliest known occupancy

or other evidence. Any or all of the buildings may be older (or younger) than present knowledge indicates. Here is the approximate sequence of construction, from 1857-1870, and the first known occupants or owners:

1857	221 Greenwich	George Mitchell, laborer
	237 Greenwich	John McDonough, longshoreman
	10 Napier (rear)	Mortimer "Murty" and John Clark, teamster & laborer Greenwich Dock Warehouse
	287-289 Union (altered)	John Cooney of 291 Union
1858	31 Alta	Richard Andrews, stevedore
	230 Fibert	William F. Ross, longshoreman
1859	224 Filbert	James Callaghan, laborer Friedlander's warehouse
	226 Filbert (moved on lot)	James Farley, laborer
	1304A Montgomery	Duncan Campbell, rigger
1861	218-220 Filbert (basement)	Patrick McDermott, laborer
	1254 Montgomery (2/3 of first floor)	Smith family
	1305-07 Montgomery (altered)	William B. Smith, stevedore
1862	21 Alta	Andrews of 31 Alta
1865	216 Filbert (altered)	Andrew Benson, stevedore
	1308 Montgomery (altered)	Joseph King, stevedore
	1309-11 Montgomery	Patrick Heffernan, laborer
	1313-15 Montgomery	Michael Carr, fireman on steamboat
1866	110 Alta	Patrick Moyles, laborer Greenwich Dock Bonded Warehouse
1867	290 Union (altered)	James McEvoy, longshoreman
1868	112-114 Alta	John Cooney (of 291 Union)
1869	228 Filbert	Philip Brown, longshoreman
	1303 Montgomery (altered)	John Allen, drayman

After this initial construction boom, which also included many houses now gone, all the other buildings in the District have been infill. Of the eighteen known before 1906 but after the 25 above, the other four on south Alta and the companion 212 Union appear to belong to the earlier group but cannot be reliably documented before an 1876 photo (a photo of uncertain date shows only No. 15 (demolished),

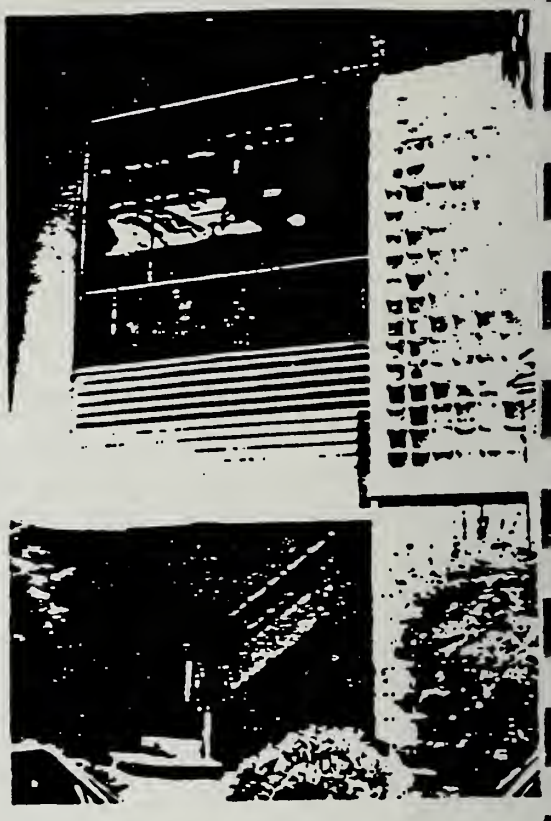
27 and 31 Alta). The infill construction continued Italianate in style for a long time: 10 Napier and 1254-62 Montgomery did not appear as we know them today until after the 1886 Sanborn map. The District seems to have skipped entirely the Stick and Queen Anne styles elsewhere so prominant among San Francisco's pre-fire buildings. The District remained the abode of waterfront workers and others in low-paid occupations who probably did any construction themselves as a sideline. The first thirteen buildings constructed after the fire, up to 1935, continued the basic simple type of appearance. They include a number of one-story houses, one of them mildly Mission Revival, and a Romeo flats building.

In the seven years beginning 1935, another construction boom came to the District, a boom of very special character, consisting of a dozen buildings rather experimental in style. The worst of the Depression was over, the streets were being paved, and Telegraph Hill had attracted quite a few poor artists and some friends who were not so poor. These people risked commissioning architects and other designers early in their careers, virtual unknowns who wanted to make reputations. Some of them did: Richard Neutra (66 Calhoun), William Wurster (60-62 Alta), Gardner Dailey (261 Filbert, altered), and Angus McSweeney (22-30 Alta) who was to be local architect for the new St. Mary's Cathedral. Others never achieved reputations but did contribute thoughtful and interesting designs to the District's stock of housing: 1360 Montgomery by Irvine Goldstine with and for Jack and Rolph Malloch; 38-50 Calhoun by and for Ian Hoeffler, proprietor-builder of Telegraph Hill compounds; 260 Green for Frieda and Dr. Hans Klussman by Louis Schalk, who never "made it" outside of Henry H. Gutterson's office. The one established firm, Fabre & Hildebrand, produced the most old-fashioned design, 40 Darrell. The others were contractor-builders who used at least some imagination in designing 1470 Montgomery, 267 Filbert, 42-46 and 52 Darrell. Some of the dozen buildings belong to the development of the "Second Bay Tradition," and it is possible the Telegraph Hill garden setting contributed to Wurster's "desire to create small-scaled usable space out of doors" (Gebhard, Guide . . . Northern California, p. 21) that became typical of this movement.

Construction has continued in the post-war period, though more slowly. Most of it is not remarkable. However, a few buildings (231 and 233 Greenwich, 25 Napier), constructed for people who know and love and understand the area, have been designed to blend inconspicuously with the pre-1869 structures.

1935-1941 BUILDINGS

1360 MONTGOMERY



1360 MONTGOMERY

22 ALTA

38-50 AND 68-70 CALHOUN

HISTORY: OPEN SPACES. Myrick gives the best information on the origin of the cliffs:

> A hundred and twenty years ago, Telegraph Hill was considerably larger than it is today, and several processes account for the deterioration. In early times, ships were ballasted with rock from the Hill. Later as the City grew, peripheral streets were lowered to provide suitable grades for horse-drawn vehicles and to transform hillside lots into commercial property. But the greatest damage was done by those who quarried the rock for street paving and bulkhead work (p. 53).

The cliffs as we know them today took shape principally with construction of the sea wall sections from Filbert to Vallejo in 1884-1885, and with later quarrying. The contractors, says, Myrick:

> Found the proximity of Telegraph Hill an irresistible temptation . . . With each blast the top of the Hill shrank westward, threatening the "old Rookeries," which dated back to the days of '49. A particularly heavy blast on the morning of June 1, 1884, brought down a large quantity of rock and a long series of landslides followed. Within the next year ten houses on Union, Calhoun, Alta and Green streets became uninhabitable; some slid off the cliff to become kindling wood (p. 55).
>
> The cliff receded westward and became higher as it approached the crest of the Hill . . . Along with the tumbling houses, the flight of steps at Union Street became a casualty. Down below Sansome Street was cut through early in 1885 (p. 56).
>
> At Green and Sansome Streets (the Gray brothers, biggest and worst quarriers) employed 30-40 men and produced 35,000 cubic yards (of crushed rock) annually in the early 1890s, the largest output in the city . . . Mixed with the rock was a lot of unstable shale which was susceptible of slippage, especially after a rain, a factor causing many problems on the Hill (p. 56).
>
> For about three quarters of a mile the east and north faces of Telegraph Hill were marked with quarries . . . For twenty years the Gray brothers made life miserable and sometimes hazardous for

residents on the Twilight Side of Telegraph Hill (p. 56).

> On the morning of March 27, 1907, a particularly heavy blast wiped out the northwest corner of Green and Calhoun . . . One house was hurled to the bottom of the cliff, almost sweeping a nearby 13-year-old girl to her death (p.61).

The quarrying ceased altogether by 1914, and photographs from the 1920s showed the cliffs still as rather barren rock slides. Vegetation developed over the years. The list of plant varieties identified one day in 1982, which includes very few California natives, supports the theory that the cliffsides were planted on purpose to grow "wild". Opel Morris of 22-30 Alta Street used to throw nasturtium seeds out her windows to cover the slope. Myrick records that Mrs. Alex Horr, who lived at 216 Filbert from at least 1928-1944, used to "sit in a bosun's chair to transform the cliff into a garden . . ." (p. 184).

Gardens there have always been alongside the houses. An 1864 photo on Telegraph Hill shows one well filled with ornamentals, and probably a kitchen garden on the side; the ten-member family is dwarfed by the vegetation. Bret Harte is said to have complained that goats browsed on the geraniums in his second-story windows (Historic Spots in California, p. 363). The waterfront workers of the nineteenth century must all have kept kitchen gardens of greater or less size, along with the legendary goats and chickens, all to help feed the hungry mouths. Another wonderful photo, dated 11 October 1904, shows a garden on the Greenwich Steps, with outlines of 21 and 23 Alta Street in the background; in the foreground is the spiritual ancestress of Grace Marchant, after whom the Filbert Steps Gardens are named; this woman is pointing a stick at her kitchen garden set among other tall plantings, while her son and daughter-in-law (seemingly) pose behind with the family cat.

The gardens as we know them today were begun by Valetta Heslett and her mother Grace Marchant (1986-1982) who moved into the 235 Greenwich Compound in 1933 and probably began gardening on the Greenwich Steps soon thereafter. When Mrs. Marchant moved to the corner of Filbert and Napier, she started the famous gardens there. A legendary figure, she is said to have pushed trash, abandoned refrigerators and even a small cottage at 221 Filbert (front) over the cliffside to make way for the gardens. When the City was planning new steps on Filbert in 1970-1971, the plans included the note: "Any trees or plantings disturbed or removed

shall be replaced by a tree or plant of equal value, quality, age and size." Plaques at Montgomery and at Napier also memorialize her work. Since her death in 1982, the gardens have been continued as a memorial. They should not be allowed to lapse.

HISTORY: THE 1906 FIRE. Telegraph Hill is the largest of the three islands surrounded by and saved from the 1906 fire (along with Jackson Square and Russian Hill). The map published in the 1907 U.S.G.S. Bulletin about the earthquake and fire shows the fire boundaries here to have been the waterfront and a line roughly following Union, Sansome, Green, Montgomery, Kearny, and Chestnut. The District boundaries include all but four of the structures on the Hill that escaped the fire, and they stay within the fire line except for 301-11 Union Street, Speedy's Grocery, which is included because the site has been a grocery most of the time since 1858, because it is the only remaining grocery of the number that used to exist in the District, because the Spediacci family who ran this grocery from many years have owned the property since 1915, and because this grocery is a special sociological phenomenon, part of the legend of Telegraph Hill too long to tell here. Speedy's is, and has long been, the vital communication center for this whole part of the Hill.

A photo of April or May 1906, taken from Russian Hill, shows three of the four corners intact at Union and Montgomery; it shows the Alta Street buildings, and Pioneer Park. The fire had reached Telegraph Hill on the third day, Friday the 20th of April, 1906. The open spaces of Pioneer Park helped the inhabitants to beat back the fire, and their story was told by Henry Anderson Lafler (quoted in Thomas & Witts, The San Francisco Earthquake, p. 239):

> It was the boys of the hill that saved the hill. It was Toby Irwin, the prizefighter, and Tim O'Brien, who works in the warehouse at the foot of the hill, and his brother, Joe, who works in a lumberyard, and the Dougherty boys, and the Volse boys, and Herman, the grocery clerk -- it was they who saved the hill.
>
> It was the old Irish woman who had hoarded a few buckets of water through the long days of fear and rumor and who now came painfully toiling up the slopes with water for the fire -- it was she who saved the hill.
>
> It was the poor peasant Italian with a barrel of cheap wine in his cellar who now rolled it out and

broke its head in with an axe, and with dipper and bucket and mop and blanket and cast-off coat fought the fire till he dropped -- it was he who saved the hill.

It was Sadie who works in the box factory and Annie who is a coat finisher and Rose who is a chocolate dipper in a candy shop who carried water and cheered on the boys to the work -- it was they who saved the hill.

It was a great, brave, roistering fight of all the dwellers on the hill for their homes and their lives, and gloriously they won.

HISTORY: THE PEOPLE. Those who lived in the District have already been indicated as poor, as waterfront workers, as Irish names in the beginning. Italians came to join them with the great migrations of the 1880s. Spanish names came after 1910. Many came via Australia or Hawaii. Many of them stayed at one address for a long time or moved only to another house on Telegraph Hill. They were a remarkably tenacious group, very much family oriented, according to Census data.

An understanding of working conditions on the docks from the 1850s on helps one envision what the neighborhood was like and why the buildings look as they do. Dock-workers' unions could be short-lived, company-run or non-existent. There were many more willing workers than jobs to be filled; competition for work was intense and wages were low. A seawall investigation in 1885 reveals that some employers insisted on paying the men in goods or through specific boarding house keepers whose services they were required to use. Quarrier George Gray testified that he had no trouble finding laborers at 17-1/2 cents an hour: "There are thousands of them there every day." (Enos, p. 98). Anytime a ship came in, longshoremen hoping for work would run to its dock and stand in the "shapeup," a semicircle around the pierhead where the foreman stood and pointed to the men he chose. Many were not chosen. It must have been terribly demoralizing. Harry Bridges has recalled that, soon after settling in San Francisco, "I spent close to a couple of years 'pirating' on the waterfront, which means trying to find a job wherever and whenever it might be by standing around in front of the docks and waiting for a job . . . 24 hours a day, certainly 16, 18 hours a day, there was always a large group of men standing outside the docks, see, ready and willing . . . They were pretty desperate, hard up, wanted to eat, hungry . . ." (Larrowe, p. 9-10)

The 1880 Census indicates the same condition; the enumerator asked and wrote down the number of months in the

previous year the person was out of work. Michael Thornton at 222 Filbert was out all twelve months; Michael Gibney at 235 Greenwich and Patrick Murphy at 22 Napier didn't work for eight months; Patrick Hilliard at 21 Napier was out of work for six months; Timothy O'Brien at 22 Napier for four months, and so on. All these men were laborers or longshoremen, though Michael Thornton soon became a grocer. One can imagine that in some of the stretches between jobs they worked on improving their houses, or raised some food, or recovered from work injuries, or helped their wives find paying lodgers -- the Census reports a lot of lodgers as well as large families in these houses. Yet Patrick McDermott, who told the Census taker he had been laid off half a year in 1880, in August 1882 signed a $2,500 contract for someone else to add two stories to his house at 218-220 Filbert, the only contract in the District found in California Architect and Building News. Life was hard, but they managed.

In the twentieth century, a number of artists came, attracted by the low rents and the good views and the Bohemian life. At first they were simply a part of the poor community; later they became a community of their own, with more and more hangers-on. The only ones reliably located so far are painter Desmond Heslett at 235 Greenwich, muralists Helen Forbes and Dorothy Puccinelli Cravath (frescoes in the Mothers' House, S.F. Zoo) at 60 Alta, actor Dr. David Robinson at 9 Calhoun, writer David Myrick at 261 Filbert, and at the previous structure of 265 Union, jeweler Pete Macchiarini, painter Wolo and composer Rudolp Friml. Dancer Mayris Chaney Martin often entertained Eleanor Roosevelt at 60 Alta. Another influential politician, Sen. Hiram Johnson, lived at 1360 Montgomery from 1937-1945.

SURVEY OF INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURES AND PROPERTIES. The survey on the following pages begins with the plant list and the bird list. For early buildings the so-called "owner" is usually the first known occupant who may or may not have been the owner. He is generally assumed to have constructed the building himself.

PREPARED BY: Anne Bloomfield, 2229 Webster, June 1985.

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Michael Alexander and Jean Milligan.

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1254-1262 MONTGOMERY STREET

APPENDIX C: SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE ARTICLE 10, APPENDIX G

APPENDIX G TO ARTICLE 10

TELEGRAPH HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

SEC. 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the area known and described in this ordinance as the Telegraph Hill Historic District contains a number of structures having a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and constitutes a distinct section of the City. The Board of Supervisors further finds that designation of said area as an Historic District will be in furtherance of and in conformance with the purposes of Article 10 of the City Planning Code and the standards set forth therein, and that preservation on an area basis rather than on the basis of individual structures alone is in order.

This ordinance is intended to further the general purpose of historic preservation legislation as set forth in Section 1001 of the City Planning Code, to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the public. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, Chapter II, Part II of the San Francisco Municipal Code, the Telegraph Hill Historic District is hereby designated as an Historic District, this designation having been duly approved by Resolution No. 10786 of the City Planning Commission. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)

SEC. 3. LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES. The location and boundaries of the Telegraph Hill Historic District shall be as designated on the Telegraph Hill Historic District Map, the original of which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File 115-86-35, which Map is hereby incorporated herein as though fully set forth. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)

SEC. 4. RELATION TO CITY PLANNING CODE. (a) Article 10 of the City Planning Code is the basic law governing historic preservation in the City and County of San Francisco. This ordinance, being a specific application of Article 10, is both subject to and in addition to the provisions thereof.

(b) Except as may be specifically provided to the contrary in this ordinance, nothing in this ordinance shall supersede, impair or modify any City Planning Code provisions applicable to property in the Telegraph Hill Historic District, including but not limited to existing and future regulations controlling uses, height, bulk, lot coverage, floor area ratio, required open space, off-street parking and signs. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)

SEC. 5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE. Telegraph Hill is one of the most famous hills in the world, as well-known as Sugar Loaf in Rio de Janeiro, and a visual landmark to sailors entering the Bay since its European discovery by Capt. Juan Manuel de Ayala in the **San Carlos** on August 5, 1775. The second European to enter the Bay, Capt. George Vancouver in 1792, specifically mentioned the fine

anchorage he had between two promontories, one of which was Loma Alta, the original name for Telegraph Hill. Telegraph Hill is famous as "the hill that's been around the world" as great portions of it were blasted out for ballast in sailing ships, "ultimately to be used to pave the streets of various exotic places" (Lotchin). The Hill's present configuration is the historical expression of the ravages created by quarrying. The rock was used not only for ballast, but also to build Gold Rush era warehouses (in a combination of brick and stone known as rubble), to fill the Bay for flatlands east of the Hill, and to build the seawall which stabilized San Francisco's waterfront. The last quarrying occurred as late as 1914.

The Historic District is a unique expression of the pattern of development which took place on the east slope of Telegraph Hill from 1850 to 1939. Topographical constraints shaped the original settlement of the Hill. The difficulty of access on hillside and cliffs, and the proximity to the City's most active waterfront area first produced a community of waterfront workers housed in "cloth lined" shacks and modest vernacular Gothic Revival houses. Intact groupings of these buildings remain within the District, and comprise the City's largest concentration of pre-1870 structures. While other areas of the City experienced ongoing development through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Telegraph Hill remained isolated. Bypassed by cablecar or streetcar lines and with vehicular access limited to Union Street, infill residential construction from 1870—1935 was limited to small-scale vernacular construction stylistically comparable to the earliest development on the Hill. Due to the cliffside location, steps, wooden walkways and a hidden network of footpaths developed throughout the area. Street paving of Montgomery and Alta in 1931 and Union and Calhoun in 1939—1940 improved general accessibility, and heralded new development in the area. Low property values facilitated real estate development. Owners retained an array of architects who produced a collection of noteworthy and (then) innovative designs. Among these are Richard Neutra's International Style Kahn House at 66—70 Calhoun Terrace (1939), and Irvine Goldstine's Art Moderne Malloch Apartment Building at 1360 Montgomery Street (1936). This change in style, scale and pattern of development punctuates the district's period of significance.

The steep cliffs, a decisive factor in determining the historic development pattern of the area, are a highly significant aesthetically important component defining the setting of the District. The abrupt changes in grade produce dramatic and unique vistas at points throughout the District. Unimproved street rights-of-way are valuable open spaces ranging in character from the well-tended, renowned Grace Marchant and Valetta's Gardens on Filbert and Greenwich Streets, to the rock-face cliffs of Green and Calhoun Streets. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)

SEC. 6. FEATURES. The architectural features of the said Historic District that should be preserved are described and depicted in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board's case report with appendix titled "Telegraph Hill Historic District," adopted August 7, 1985, as amended by the City Planning Commission, which is hereby incorporated herein and made a part hereof as though fully set forth. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)

SEC. 7. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS. The procedures, requirements, controls and standards in Sections 1005 through 1006.8 of Article 10 of the City Planning Code shall apply to all applications for Certificates of Appropriateness in the Telegraph Hill Historic District. In addition, the following provisions shall apply to all such applications; in the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the following provisions and Article 10, those procedures, requirements, controls and standards affording stricter protection to the Historic District shall prevail.

(a) **Character of the Historic District.** The standards for review of all applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are as set forth in Section 1006.7 of Article 10. For purposes of review pursuant to said standards, the character of said Historic District shall mean the architectural features and historic open space of the Telegraph Hill Historic District referred to and described in Section 6 of this ordinance.

(b) **Height.** Buildings should relate to the height of structures immediately adjacent and in the general area with the intent that the building should be contained within an envelope that slopes upward or downward with the slope of the property.

(c) **Alterations and New Construction.** Alterations and new construction shall be compatible with the nearby contributory buildings within the Historic District, and shall conform to the following provisions:

(1) **Style.** New construction in a contemporary idiom is encouraged, with specific regulation as follows:

(a) Bay windows and porticos are not characteristic of the District, and are discouraged.

(b) Porches and balconies are characteristic design features of the District, and are encouraged.

(c) Gable roof forms are encouraged.

(d) The mass of new buildings should relate to the topographical contour of the site, and be compatible with adjacent buildings.

(e) Horizontal rustic wood siding is the traditional building material in the District, and its use is encouraged over other surfacing materials, including wood shingles. Masonry surfaces may be appropriate in subareas with a concentration of Art Moderne or International Style building.

(f) Fenestration should be proportionate and in scale with traditional patterns within the District. Wooden sash is encouraged over aluminum or other metal sash.

(g) Detailing should relate to the simple, straightforward traditional vernacular forms found in the District.

(2) **Landscaping.** All applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for construction shall include landscaping plans for required yards, setbacks and areas counting toward useable open space requirements of Section 135 of the City Planning Code. All construction activities, such as but not limited to demolition, storage of construction materials, excavation, and application of concrete and other chemicals shall be conducted to minimize interference with historic gardens in public rights-of-way and in historic gardens adjoining them. Fences shall not obstruct views of private gardens abutting historic public rights-of-way.

(3) **Access.** Access for demolition and/or construction shall utilize existing paths, steps and walkways. The project sponsor shall replace in kind and value any

landscaping features on public space which may be damaged or destroyed by such activities.

(d) **Wooden Walkways and Steps.** Existing wooden steps on Filbert Street and boardwalk on Napier Lane shall be maintained as unique contributors to the setting of the District.

(e) **Public Rights-of-Way.** Unimproved sections of public rights-of-way shall be treated as open space. In such spaces gardens are encouraged: Ornamental gardens where the terrain slopes gently, and "natural" gardens elsewhere. Changes in the existing circulation patterns shall not be made except when such change is clearly preferable to provide for public safety.

(f) **Street Furniture.** Street furniture including but not limited to lighting fixtures, trash receptacles, and benches shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Such features shall complement the scale and character of the District.

(g) **Demolition.** Demolition of Contributory and Contributory/Altered buildings shall be subject to the maximum controls allowed under Article 10 of the City Planning Code. A demolition permit shall not be issued until all other required permits for new construction have been approved. No application for a demolition permit shall be deemed complete until all building permits for the replacement structure have been approved.*

(h) **Cliffs.** Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness proposing new construction on lots located upon the cliff areas of the District shall conform to the following provisions:

(1) Applications shall include geological studies made by a licensed civil engineer whose principle practice area is rock mechanics.

(2) At the hearing on the Certificate of Appropriateness pursuant to Sections 1006.2(b) and 1006.3, the Planning Commission shall determine whether the construction proposed by the applicant will have a reasonable probability of endangering life, limb, or property due to landsliding or structural failure. The Planning Commission's determination shall be based upon the geological studies submitted by the applicant or any interested party, as well as based upon testimony from, but not limited to, geotechnical and structural engineers.

(3) If the Planning Commission finds, based on the evidence presented at the hearing, that there is a reasonable probability that the proposed construction will endanger life, limb, or property of any person due to landsliding or structural failure, the Planning Commission shall disapprove the Certificate of Appropriateness.

(4) If the Planning Commission determines that the proposed construction can be safely undertaken without endangering life, limb, or property of any person due to landsliding or structural failure, the applicant shall take a "soft" approach to cliff retention, such as rock bolts and prestressed tendons, in order to preserve the integrity of the cliffs.

(i) **Significance of Individual Buildings to the Historic District.** The history of each parcel within the Historic District is documented on the survey worksheets (Appendix A to the Telegraph Hill Historic District Case Report). Each building is assigned a finding from the three following categories:

(1) **Contributory.** This category identifies buildings which date from the Historic District's period of significance and retain their historic integrity. These structures are of the highest importance in maintaining the character of the Historic

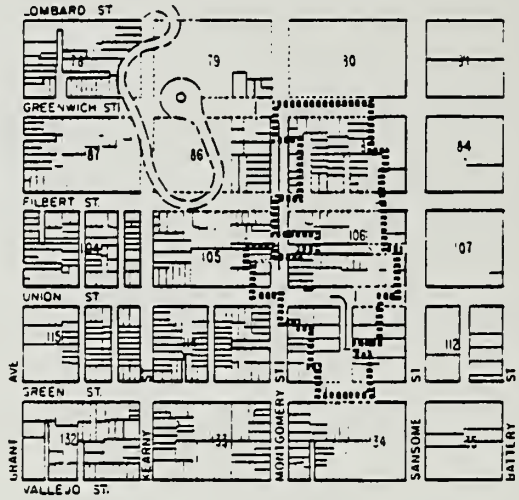
District. The maximum suspension period allowable under Article 10 shall be imposed on applications for demolition of Contributory buildings.

(2) **Contributory/Altered.** This category identifies buildings which date from the Historic Disrict's period of significance but have had their historic integrity compromised by inappropriate alterations. Appropriate restoration of such buildings is encouraged. The maximum suspension period allowable under Article 10 shall be imposed on applications for demolition of Contributory/Altered buildings. If a building in this category were to be appropriately restored, the category designation may be amended to "Contributory."

(3) **Noncontributory.** This category identifies buildings which postdate the Historic District's period of significance. Demolition permit applications for these buildings will be processed without reference to the suspension provisions of Article 10. Alterations to Noncontributory buildings would require Certificate of Appropriateness review in order to minimize conflicts with the historic character of the District. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)

* It is not the intent of this section to prohibit consideration and approval of permits for new construction and demolition on the property while it is subject to the demolition prohibition set forth herein.

SEC. 8. PAINT COLOR. Nothing in this legislation shall be construed to regulate paint colors within the District. (Added by Ord. 442-86, App. 11/13/86)



Revised Boundary City Planning Commission

August 21, 1986

TELEGRAPH HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

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CHAPTER IX

EIR AUTHORS AND CONSULTANTS; ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

EIR AUTHORS

Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, California 94103
Environmental Review Officer: Hillary E. Gitelman
EIR Supervisor: Jim McCormick

EIR CONSULTANTS

Environmental Science Associates
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, California 94104-4207
Project Director: Marty Abell, AICP
Project Manager: Karl F. Heisler
Participants: Chuck Bennett, Dan Cohen, Peter Hudson, Perry Jung, Barbara Malloch Leitner, Rowell Llanillo

Patrick McGrew Architects
41 Sutter Street, Suite 101
San Francisco, CA 94104
Patrick McGrew

PROJECT SPONSOR

Alta Street Development, LLC
3243 Washington Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
John Abbott, John Willis, Bob Mahoney

PROJECT ARCHITECT

Pfau Architecture
630 Third Street, Suite 200
San Francisco, California 94107
Peter Pfau

PROJECT ARCHITECT

McEachron Architects
100 Edgewood Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94117
Ed McEachron

PROJECT ATTORNEYS

McCarthy & Schwartz
655 Montgomery Street, 17th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111
Robert J. McCarthy, Esq.

PROJECT ATTORNEYS

Gladstone & Vettel
Penthouse, 177 Post Street
San Francisco, CA 94108
Steve Vettel

PROJECT ADVOCATE

GCA Strategies
655 Montgomery, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94111
Debra Stein

ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

There were no organizations or persons consulted other than those already listed in the references of individual sections of the EIR.